

~~W. J. W. W.~~

From F. L. Christmas 1927



Mary Hunt Palmer Tyler
As she looked when she wrote her Book

Grandmother Tyler's Book

The Recollections of
MARY PALMER TYLER
(MRS. ROYALL TYLER)

1775 ~ 1866

Edited by
FREDERICK TUPPER AND HELEN TYLER BROWN

Illustrated and with Charts



G.P. Putnam's Sons
New York & London
The Knickerbocker Press
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INTRODUCTION

THREE years ago in the old Tyler house on Tyler Street in Brattleboro, Vermont, a guest from the state university listened to the reading of the memoir which his hostesses called *Grandmother Tyler's Book*. Time seemed to crumble and generations to fold over upon one another, as when in his boyhood he had heard his own grandmother recount with like vividness and fullness her experiences in two Charleston earthquakes seventy-five years asunder. The voice of the Autobiography was as authentic as that of the living woman whom he remembered. A year later, in a restaurant at Neuilly, Major Royall Tyler, possessor of his great-grandmother's manuscript and of his great-grandfather's name and features, chatted with the same guest about the Book, as an Englishman over strong tobacco in a college common-room inevitably talks of Jane Austen! Tyler concluded: "That memoir is literature and should be published." His companion, who was quite of his mind, later took occasion to send a typewritten copy of the manuscript to Madam Tyler's grand-nephew, Major George Haven Putnam. The

verdict of the publisher's reader to whom it was submitted cannot be bettered as a succinct summary of background:—"An interesting account of family life in New England in Revolutionary times and later. The narrative contains the intimate daily details that only an eye-witness and particularly a woman could have given to the manners, customs, modes of living and occurrences of those days. As a picture of the late seventeen and early eighteen hundreds the record has exceptional value." Upon this advice the house of Putnam decided to publish *Grandmother Tyler's Book*.

Madam Tyler writes for the seven survivors of her eleven children and for the sons and daughters of her sons. Her life spanned the nine decades between the beginning of the Revolution and the end of the Civil War, for she was an infant refugee from Lexington in 1775 and survived by a year the great conflict of sections which called her grandchildren to both armies. Her memoir (written between 1858 and 1863) begins with the colonial period of the middle eighteenth century,—for by aid of the notes of her mother Elizabeth Hunt Palmer, and of her own youthful hearsay she anticipates her birth by a score of years—and ends with the War of 1812. The big bow-wow thing would be as much out of place in her quiet pages as in those of the author of *Pride and Prejudice*, but she echoes clearly the thrilling maternal reminiscences of the Boston Tea Party, of Lexington and Bunker Hill, which had filled

her childish ears eighty years before and become a part of her young consciousness. And she has her own lively stories to tell of the coming of the French officers to her grandfather's home, when even to a five-year-old child their bright uniforms promised victory, of the joyous excitement in her own little household over the Declaration of Peace, and of her awed presence as a girl in her early teens at the inauguration of Washington.

Mary Palmer came of people deemed by all cultured and gentle, who filled high places in town and army, who had their pictures painted by Copley, who spread their coats of arms on their shop-bills, whose sons held high place at Harvard, when class-rank depended not on parts but on parentage, and whose daughters bided at home in polite unaccomplishment. Daughter and granddaughter of two Revolutionary generals, she had seen and known the great folk of the early American world, the Quincys and Adamses of Braintree, who sat so often at the hospitable board of the Palmers at Friendship Hall in Germantown. When there came a change in the family fortunes as sudden as the peripetia of a play, the observing child gave equally fascinated attention to the coming and going of the Southern and English folk who filled the far less lavish table of her mother's boarding-house in Boston. As a little nursemaid in the family of Elbridge Gerry—the same Elbridge Gerry who had wooed her Aunt Kate—she gazed

open-eyed upon "the gay scenes and circles of New York," the follies of the men, the fashions of the women; or as a young lady guest of her landlord uncle at an exclusive watering place she watched at close range "the élite," the Hamiltons and Provoosts and Montgomerys, and nabobs from far-off Antigua. In her pages John Adams plays the double rôle of humble wooer and haughty father, and John Hancock enacts amid hisses the part of ruthless man of capital.

But it is amid gentler scenes and quieter places that the reader feels the deep charm of these pages—in the meadows and shores that stretch around what is now Snug Harbor near Quincy, in the many modest Boston homes of the Palmers, in rural labors and pleasures, whether at Framingham or New Lebanon, in the amusing reactions of a teacher "boarding out" in a farmer's home, in the chronicle of the winter drive from Eastern Massachusetts to Vermont, in the Arcadian life of a frontier community, in the daily interests of wife and mother and neighbor. We marvel always at the freshness of the writer's memory. People, places and things of seventy or eighty years syne are as distinct as yesterday. Grandmother Tyler is never content merely with the larger aspects of a mental picture. No room for wonder, perhaps, that she should recall so vividly the stately hall of Joseph Palmer and "the stone house" where the children played, or the home near Park Street burying ground where her father pastured his

cow or that big dwelling with a cupola near Fort Hill or the family's little cage in an alley near Cornhill! But, what to a mere man seems miraculous, the mode and colors of skirt and stomacher or the shape and hue of a hat seen three quarters of a century since, the dresses that Lady Washington and Mrs. Gerry and her sisters wore at tea-party or ball in the New York of 1789, are flashed forth with the fluent accuracy of a keen-eyed girl, just home from a display of grand toilettes. Talk and tone and gesture of her youth are revived—her shocked expostulation with her mettlesome younger brother, Hampden, for imbibing the poison of Tom Paine's *Age of Reason*, and his dogged defence of his error, or her sisterly mediation in the indiscreet love-affair of this same coltish lad. Her trustworthy memory of little things and traits makes her an adept in the portrayal of what an earlier day called "characters," strongly marked types that long ago jetted it on the stage of life—the would-be fine lady from England of the Boston boarding-house, with her delicate swoonings, the blind electrician of the seven-teen-eighties and his amazing box of tricks, the masonic impostor, sadly displaying at New England homesteads osseous relics of his lost Lenore; the bookish farmer, with his love of letters and his lapses in language, the tactless wife of the village parson, the susceptible school-ma'am of high academic pedigree, who broke Brattleboro hearts, and the Boston flapper who shat-

tered Brattleboro conventions in the early century. All these seem very real to us as we read.

Yet the most scrupulous regard for the past would not save her from mere chronicling, if the past did not become in her Book the very present. She is not simply recalling her infancy, her maidenhood, her life as bride and young matron; but she actually lives through each crowded period as she writes. It is not an old, old woman but a very little girl who tells with childish glee of the delightful climbings and slidings on the stone staircase at Germantown, and of the thrilling excitement of "tackling" horse and chaise for a drive to Col. Quincy's wonder-world of fruits and flowers, and of the happiest day of all, the one when the French officers came and "I thought that mother looked beautiful in her white dress and beautiful hair and complexion and so did the officers." Pitiful terror wails in the stories of the sudden rising of the waters and of the famous dark day of 1780; and helpless remonstrance against undeserved punishment cries out in the distressing scene with Aunt Betsey. Very poignant too are the pages where the little maid, who is not the less a gentlewoman because she is a child, reveals her sorrowful reaction to the wreck of fortune and change of estate after her grandfather's ruin. Her young heart is overflowing with love for the dear old man, and teeming with wrath against the mighty ogre who savagely devours him and picks his bones, and then takes money-bags

and lands. She eats with tears the bread of mortified dependence among the famous and forgetful folk who have hitherto met her own people on equal terms. In the straitened farm-life of Framingham she and the other gallant women of the family, while "weaning themselves of the idea that they must be ladies," show their unaffected gentleness in every word and deed. Just so well-born Southern girls proved their courage by confronting "narrow affairs at home" after the great war of nearly a century later. Youth is healthy and hopeful and, though skies are long overcast, they clear at last. Sometimes indeed they open unto her and she sees visions, for hers was a deeply religious nature prone to communings of spirit. The most beautiful thing in the Book, indeed its quintessence, yet so exquisitely subtle as to seem unconscious, is the gradual unfolding of a lovely soul on its way from childhood to womanhood. Increasing poise and balance, deepening impressions, ripening judgments, quickening responsiveness to the influences of earth and heaven—all these half reveal and half conceal themselves from page to page, until, as a bud bursts into blossom, the girl without and within attains to the full stature and sweetness of her maturity. In her nature were allied gentleness and firmness, sympathy and self-command. It is characteristic of the innate cheerfulness of the woman that she yields to despair only under the deepest of all trials to a feminine soul—the spoiling

by witless maids and wailing infants of a formal dinner party to old friends of her husband. "It distresses me to think of it even to this day. It was one of the dark days of my life."

Critics are wont to protest against the reality of the frequent prelude to romantic fiction—old greybeard or grandam retailing to children about the fireside-chair the intimate love-story of long ago. "An impossible situation—such a thing is never done!" Now that is exactly what Grandmother Tyler does in those pages which we deem her brightest, for she is her most delightful self, whenever the hero and idol of her youth, always her man of men, comes into the tale. Her mother, Elizabeth Hunt, had other suitors before Joseph Pearse Palmer danced attendance with his copy of *Sir Charles Grandison*. Mary is only eight or nine, a curly haired child in pink frock and red shoes, when Royall Tyler, in his late twenties, red-coated, white-vested, ruffle-shirted, rides into her life. Nor does he ride out again, for the soft eyes of the little girl watch him closely as he plays cavalier to the lady of his choice; and they doubtless cry a little, when that fickle damsel turns from him to another love, with whom, of course, she will be unhappy. Henceforth he makes always the most effective entrances—as a rescuer of dames in distress when duns are thundering at the door, as a doughty subduer of rebels, booted and spurred for the pursuit of the infamous Shays, as a fashionable author

and wit charming the town with h's talents. And the child is alternately fearful and grateful and proud. How deeply the fourteen-year-old worshiper resents any criticism of that wonderful play of his, though she shrinks instinctively from its "broad jokes"! And when, two or three years later, the gallant, now close to middle age, suddenly appears at her uncle's house in New Lebanon, the young lady forgets the passing years and greets him with all the open-armed affection of her childhood, to her subsequent deep embarrassment. She is as far from the conventional reticences and reluctances of her century and of her May of life, as she is above the mawkish sensibilities and sentimentalities of her contemporary, Lydia Languish. The man who was wont to call the child "his little wife," knows well her heart and she knows that he knows it, hence it would be prudery to conceal her joy at his formal offer of self. He is ceremonious and chivalrous, she vivid and joyous. The hero is so thoughtful of Mary's father, so generous to her family, so repentant for the dreadful blunder of the secret marriage, that we applaud when he and our heroine drive away across the snow, behind the spirited Crock and Smut, to their Vermont Arcadia. Mary's sense of values and sincerity do not permit her to idealize her husband. His moods of stagnant depression when he should have acted, his silences when he should have spoken, his irritation and anger when he should have held his peace, are clearly seen and shown.

But she gives an abiding impression of a high-minded gentleman of signal grace and charm with quick sensibilities. His bubbling humor and roguish fancy—"the boy eternal" in him—often baffled her, one thinks, but here one may be wrong. The gesture of the ever offered arm distinguishes her husband from the less gallant males of her later time which seems to her bankrupt of chivalry since the passing of him whom she survived by forty years.

Royall Tyler is the chief actor among the men of *Grandmother's Book*, but many other figures tread the stage, for it is a play of passing generations with crowded entrances and exits. And even if the persons linger but a moment, they are not shadows but draw the full breath of life. Here is maternal Grandfather John Hunt, handsome, versatile, popular with men, and an obstinate unbeliever in the brains of women; and his wife, Ruth Fessenden, whose exquisitely neat raiment won her lord's heart. And Mary's father's father, Gen. Joseph Palmer, whose virtues seemed to another granddaughter, Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, a challenge to the pen of her son-in-law, Nathaniel Hawthorne. In our drama the General is a tragic figure in his fall from high estate and in his brave but futile struggle against ill-fortune. Still more pathetic—if pathos connotes suffering—is his fine-grained son, Joseph Pearse Palmer, star-dogged in all his courses, failing in all his ventures, dying in his prime among strangers, yet preserving in

adversity his sweetness and gentleness of soul. He danced a hornpipe at his wedding, but few, one fancies, in his later years. His loving spirit speaks in the letters to his daughter that she wisely includes in the Memoir. The personality of Mary's mother, Elizabeth Hunt, is sharply defined both by her own reminiscences and her daughter's recollections. Charming of person in her youth, tender of heart, eager of mind, keen of temper, quick of tears and of tongue, she became in later life a mentor to her sons-in-law and, if we may believe Sophia Hawthorne, a martinet to her grandchildren—a very formidable old lady. Vivid are the young people of three different eras; Mary's aunts, Katy Hunt, who lost her lover through her lack of letters, and Polly Palmer, whose steel nerves were jangled out of tune by a sudden shot; Mary's brother and sisters, sailor-boy Joe and his dreadful adventures on the sea which soon engulfed him, tiny Amelia and her prodigious journey into the wide, wide world, Edward and the fatal bath in the Connecticut, Hampden, his loves and his lawlessness, "darling Betsey" and "lovely Sophia" and "gentle George" and "Baby Katherine"; Mary's children, Royall the scholar and John the merchant and the troop of boys and girls growing up in the Brattleboro home. These are the persons of *Grandmother's Book*.

The Book is literature, not only because it reveals intimately and accurately the daily round of our fore-

fathers both in the sun and in the shade, and because it reflects with passionate sincerity the noble and engaging spirit of a woman living over intensely every incident and emotion that her long memory cherishes; but because it is written in a style at once fluent and flexible, the index of a mind and heart at ease. "Polly" Palmer at fourteen made her loving father apprehensive that she was "deviating from that simplicity which was particularly pleasing to him." Mrs. Royall Tyler at thirty-six, the author of *The Maternal Physician*, writes of sores and snuffles with ponderous circumlocutions and decorative quotations. Under the simplest ailment she shoves her quill and lifts it straightway to literary levels, "happy in preserving but one lovely babe from fell disease, in averting the deadliest sorrow of affliction from the bosom of but one mother." She weans a baby in the words of Michael Drayton's passionate sonnet of farewell to his mistress, "Since there's no help, come, let us kiss and part." (Query—Did Royall Tyler's drollery dictate the inept borrowings?) Everything is pitched an octave or two above nature. Grandmother Tyler in her middle eighties eschews all ornament and indirection and goes straight to the heart of every matter. Her diction is not faultless; her choice of words is not always happy, nor is her phrasing always free from awkwardness. But it is a style quite without effort or self-consciousness, that natural, easy, flowing epistolary manner of the well-bred gentlewoman, which

even the enthusiastic Macaulay could not praise beyond its deserts. She sees clearly, feels strongly and tells simply.

Two other women of Mary Tyler's blood shared her love of reminiscence. Her mother, Elizabeth Hunt Palmer, in her middle seventies dictated to her Tyler grandchildren a scant record of her father's family and of her first thirty-five years. Her sister Elizabeth's daughter, Sophia Hawthorne, at fifty composed for the entertainment of her children a few pages of recollections, which all the world may read in her son Julian's biography. Mrs. Palmer's brief sketch, which her daughter stored in her marvelous memory, provided for *Grandmother Tyler's Book* a pious precedent, though the younger woman often covers the same ground with perfect freedom of movement and with larger sources of information. Frequently Mary's hearsay is more adequate than Elizabeth's first-hand evidence—though the mother's brevity, as in the fleeting glimpse of the Boston Tea Party, is sometimes more effective. Her niece's admirable little composition (1859), exquisite in its diction and interesting for its pictures of Grandmama Palmer and Uncle George, Mary doubtless never knew. Though Mrs. Tyler was far older than her two kinswomen when she turned autobiographer, she alone had the persistence to carry out her design. What vividness and vim in her eighties!

Our octogenarian is never garrulous, for her lucid

mind perceives and presents the pith of each topic without needless delay, yet, particularly in her early pages, appears a disregard of chronology, which to her family group doubtless seemed far more natural and delightful than any slavery to dates, but which would certainly bring the less attentive present-day reader into confusion. Hence, in the interest of clearness, the editor has been compelled to rearrange the material of the Book in the order of time, and to make this sequence even more formally evident by a division into chapter periods. May he be forgiven for thus straightening a waywardly winding road? Nobody in the old lady's first audience was in the least puzzled by the occurrence and recurrence of hosts of names of Hunts and Palmers and Tylers, for these were "sisters and cousins and aunts" familiar since early childhood; but the outsider must be guided through the maze of relationships. The family-trees in the Appendix will give the needful clue. Footnotes must cast their penny-glimmer over the shadowy shapes that come and go in the half-darkness of the yesteryear. And occasionally the director must prepare the stage, and present the persons and speeches, so that the little drama will move right onward. Fortunately such intrusions become less and less necessary in the later acts. At the end of the play the author is in complete control.

In Mary Tyler's dedication of *The Maternal Physician* to "My Mother," she is chiefly grateful for "the sublime

lesson that the best pleasures of a woman's life are found in the faithful discharge of her maternal duties." Her own proudest titles were wife and mother. And in her husband and children there was large room for pride. We may smile a little over the raptures of the Brattleboro Chronicler, Henry Burnham, when he declares of the Tylers: "In that far off time in our history when this family settled here, they must have occupied as exceptional a position in Brattleboro as does the Book of Job in the Old Testament. . . . Their first coming to the high hill overlooking the whole town seems to us as the morning dawn of intellectual life in this region or the beginning of an Elizabethan age in Brattleboro." Yet these boys and girls might well kindle enthusiasm. The true ending to Mary's memoir is not the "sorrowful conclusion" of the passing of her first born, but her happiness in the splendid children that remained—her four clergymen, her Boston merchant, her judge, her major, her "teacher of three generations," and others not less cherished, and, thronging fast behind them, their children too. The story of this love and pride will be suggested by her great-granddaughter in her supplementary chapter to *Grandmother's Book*. In Mary Tyler's life the end crowned the work.

If our lady writes for her children and her children's children, she writes of her husband. She is not only daughter but wife—from her early girlhood the "little wife" of him who was ever her best-beloved of men.

In her Book she builded better than she knew, if this simple record of her life and his does aught to enhance a reputation that is far below deserts by directing appreciative eyes to those varied writings which she loved and praised for their maker's sake. The dramatist in *The Contrast*, the novelist in *The Algerine Captive*, the colonist in the *Colon and Spondee* papers, the essayist in *The Yankey in London* and in the unpublished *Bay Boy*, the poet in happy verses of occasion, and the humorist everywhere—these were delightful phases of her Chief Justice that the world should share with her. The friends and kinsmen who present to readers of today *Grandmother Tyler's Book* dare hope that those who welcome her will soon welcome Royall Tyler too—that her little bark may sail attendant to his, “pursue the triumph and partake the gale.”

FREDERICK TUPPER.

MEMORIES OF THE BOOK.

When I was a little girl, I often heard of a great book, full of wonderful stories, that sometime when I was “old enough” I would have the happiness of reading. Grandfather called it “Mother's Book”; Mamma, “Grandmother's Book”; and others “Great-grandmother's Book.” Sometimes some one would tell me a story from this book, until it came to stand in my fancy as The Book in all the world to wish to read.

Mamma told me that the play and prattle of a fatherless boy cousin and myself, infants together, daily brightened the extreme age of the beloved lady, author of the Book, bedridden for a long time. Her overflowing motherly affection blessed us, then the latest born of the family circle. Memory recalls a face and form of love bending over me—a little sleigh into which my tiny self was lifted and tucked snugly in with a blue, gayly flowered, striped coverlet, a black rag doll beside me. Swift motion over snow sparkling in the sunshine and creaking under the runners—a sweet voice, musical as bells, telling me that we were “going over to grandma’s house”—the sense, indescribable, of pure joy and then a benign presence. Having loved her own all her life, she loved them unto the end.

One warm autumn, when I was a “big girleen,” I recollect Mamma’s bidding me notice and never forget a group gathered on the piazza of my Grandfather Tyler’s house,—five white haired brothers, all smoking cigars, sitting side by side in ancient wooden armchairs, tilted back against the wall. Their handsome, benignant faces; their deep, chuckling laughter; their jokes; their use of nicknames—John, “the General”; William, “the Major”; George, “the Reverend”; (Charles) Royall, “the Judge”; Pickman, “the Doctor”;—and their reminiscent talk stamped indelibly the scene upon my mind. Young as I was, the reverence and filial

devotion evident in words and demeanor when they spoke of their mother and "Her Book" aroused in me a vision of her mighty motherhood.

Not long after this, Grandfather Tyler asked me to make a fair transcription of the manuscript volume he placed in my hands which contained a word-for-word copy of his Mother's Book, in the hand-writing of different members of the family who co-operated in this labor, the original being kept in the old home until this copy was completed. How honored I felt as I chose blank pages, suitably bound, and began this pleasant task. As I pored over this transcript of my Great-grandmother's Book, the facts narrated were fused with my earlier imaginings, and The Wonder Lady of my childish fancy changed into a very real person. Years later, when I happened to visit the inheritor of his "Grandmother's Book," he took from a safe the treasured volume and gave it to me to examine. The sight of the very paper and ink she used only deepened my sense of the reality of her individuality and made her seem, as it were, still a sharer in our every-day existence. The blue ink was as bright as it was when, with a sharpened quill for a pen, she traced the firm characters for the son who gave her the "beautiful book" in which he begged her to set down the tales he and his brothers and sisters had listened to with unflagging interest, that their children and children's children might possess her pictures of the early days of

their country, as their kindred shared in its struggles and achievements.

Now, sixty years after Great-grandmother wrote, "I have written enough," one of her great-grandsons permits one of her grand-nephews,—a grandson of her youngest sister,—to print, for all the world to read, this, Her Book, to be known henceforth as

Grandmother Tyler's Book.

HELEN TYLER BROWN.

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Grandmother Tyler's Book

Grandmother Tyler's Book

CHAPTER I

BEFORE THE REVOLUTION (1738-1775)

Mother and daughter as biographers. Family traditions. The Hunts of Watertown. John Hunt and Ruth Fessenden—their children—John Hunt's system of female education. Elizabeth Hunt and Joseph Pearse Palmer—the education and wooing of Elizabeth—her visit to her lover's family. The Palmers of Germantown. General Palmer—his daughters and son—his life and industries in Quincy—the building of the country house—Polly Palmer's fright. The episode of Cranch and Adams. Young Palmer about his father's business—his wedding with Elizabeth—his married life in Boston—his share in the Boston Tea Party—his exile from the city.

“YOU say, my dear son, [William Clark Tyler] that you and the rest of my dear children will be gratified if I can muster up from my memory box some remembrances of old times as far back as my father's days and my own childhood—on, on to the present time. This, I understand from your note, is your wish and for this end you furnish this beautiful book. I will try what I can do, if my life and strength are continued,—a doubtful contingent when I am already eighty-three and one half years old. All due consideration I

trust will be made by you all if I should evince the garrulity of old age as well as its forgetfulness as I proceed with my task."

When Mary Palmer Tyler, in her Brattleboro home, at the age of eighty-three, in May, 1858, thus set herself to the mellow occupation of reminiscence, for the sake of her children and grandchildren, she was guided by the same firm hand that had directed her first steps in life. Some thirty years before this, her mother, Elizabeth Hunt Palmer, then in her seventies, had told to the same children the story of her own younger time. The daughter follows the older woman's lead with a large admiration: "Pickman [Thomas Pickman Tyler] has it written down in a book from her dictation, and it would be almost wicked for me to attempt it after her," and again: "I will not spoil your treat when you can read out of Pickman's book so much richer dainties both for soul and body than I can possibly recollect."¹ But, despite this filial reverence, her far fuller record is seldom content with abridgement or repetition. Even for the earlier years, before her own birth, she sometimes amplifies from the hearsay of her youth; later, where her mother's meagre record is silent, she freely invokes her own childhood memories. Madam Palmer's bit of biography—barely a dozen

¹ The daughter is aided by an accurate memory of her mother's little book rather than by the book itself: "If I could get at the journal Pickman has, written from her own mouth, related in her own vivacious manner, it would be well worth reading the account," etc., she says once.

pages in all—has the advantage of stricter sequence and greater nearness to events. Madam Tyler's roving recollections move in an ampler air, and with a larger grace. Both mother and daughter, as they enter hand in hand, are charmingly frank and simple. Let us listen now to one, now to the other.¹

["My father's name was John Hunt. He was born in Boston.² He was graduated at Harvard College, [1734] and studied for the ministry. He became acquainted with Miss Ruth Fessenden whom he fell in love with and invited to his Commencement. She is said to have been envied by all the girls in town, because of her good fortune in getting so handsome a man. He had two sisters, Mrs. Blanchard of Boston, and Mrs. Boyles, whose husband was a merchant at the same place. He was once preaching at a place called Bellingham in Massachusetts where he was put to bed in wet sheets, and caught a cold which he never got well of and which he propagated to all his children. This prevented his preaching, and he forsook the pulpit, and established a distillery at Watertown, Mass.³ He

¹ Elizabeth Hunt Palmer's contributions are signed by her initials and bracketed to distinguish them from her daughter's.

² John Hunt of Watertown (b. Nov., 1716) was the only son of Samuel Hunt of Boston and Mary Langdon.

³ This desertion of divinity for a distillery evidently spelled no sacrifice of social standing. At Harvard College, where boys were rated by the ranks of their parents, John Hunt's sons, Samuel (1765) and William (1768) were named twelfth out of fifty-five and sixth out of forty-two in their respective classes. The Hunts were seemingly of high repute.

was a delegate to the General Court of Massachusetts from that town for a number of years, and was also Justice of the Peace. He was always called Esquire Hunt, and accumulated some property." E. H. P.]

"Grandfather Hunt perhaps remembered how, when he was yet a student, he fell in love with the rosy cheeks and agile figure of Ruth Fessenden, as she and several of her mates amused themselves rolling down hill. In after life he boasted that he was then determined to have that exquisitely neat maiden for his wife because her stockings, shoes and all her underclothes were so exquisitely neat and nice, although at the time he did not know her name. The facts were these: several of the Cambridge students had obtained permission to recreate fishing and so forth on the beach at Sandwich and while strolling along through the fields and woods, they were suddenly induced to stop and listen by the merry voices of a party of young damsels amusing themselves on a neighboring hill, rolling down the verdant slopes and then running up again to see which were the most active. The sight of several young gentlemen, you may be sure, scattered the merry group who soon vanished. John Hunt, however, resolved to learn who his charmer was, and as Sandwich at that early day was sparsely inhabited, he was speedily gratified by learning she was the only daughter of the venerable minister of the par-

ish,¹ and in due time she did become his wife [1738] and mother of eight [ten], children."

["His eldest son was Samuel, who graduated at Harvard and was licensed to preach; but his lungs failed him. After this he taught grammar school in School Street, Boston, for a great many years, and finally moved to Lexington, Ky., where a son of his was settled, where he died. John, the next son, was educated at Harvard, was unfortunate, was Constable and Deputy Sheriff and in these offices he sunk all his property. Married Miss Ruth Baxter who died. Afterwards married a low woman, by whom he had a large family. This branch of the family was excommunicated by the others. Ruth was the next child. She married a Mr. Taylor of Pomfret, Connecticut. She died young and was somewhat suspected of being poisoned by her husband. William, the next child, was educated at Harvard, studied law, and settled upon the homestead at Watertown; became sick and died of consumption. Catherine lived and died at Watertown an old maid. Thomas and Ephraim entered the Revo-

¹ According to Freeman, *History of Cape Cod*, I, 652, this "venerable minister" of Sandwich was the Rev. William Fessenden, who in 1716 married Martha Wyell (Wyeth) and was the father of Thomas Fessenden (*infra*), graduate of Harvard College, 1758, and minister at Walpole, N. H. Bond, *Genealogies of Families and Descendants of the Early Settlers of Watertown, Mass.*, 1860, p. 799, notes that John Hunt (selectman of Watertown, 1747, '52, '54, '55, representative, 1741, '51, '58, farmer of excise, 1752 and retail trader, 1740-1770) married Ruth Fessenden, b. June 21, 1717, eldest child of William and Martha (Wyeth) Fessenden.

lutionary army. Thomas never left the army. After the peace he continued in the United States service and was stationed at various military posts and finally died at St. Louis with the rank of colonel. Ephraim was in the battle of Germantown. After the Revolutionary War he married and settled in the state of New York and died in Albany. These two young men walked one on the one side and the other on the other side of the unfortunate Major Andre.¹ Mary, another of the children, perhaps the oldest, married a Mr. Hunt and removed to New Providence, one of the Bahama Isles, where he died. She returned and taught a female school at Boston. Married again, a Dr. Perkins of Bridgewater, was unhappy and died there. Next came myself, Elizabeth. Sarah was the youngest of the family; was subject to fits, was never married and died at Watertown. I was born on the first of October, 1756.”² E. H. P.]

Mary Palmer Tyler's record adds nothing of the “excommunication” of John, and tells us little more of Ruth, who was “somewhat suspected of being poisoned

¹ Dr. James Thatcher in his journal kept during the Rev. War says under Oct. 2, 1780: “Major Andre is no more among the living. I was so near during the solemn march as to observe every movement. Maj. A. walked from the stone house in which he had been confined, between two of our subaltern officers, arm in arm.” T. P. T.

² Elizabeth Hunt Palmer's account of her father's family is not without inaccuracies including the mistake of a year in the date of her own birth. She was born on Oct. 1, 1755 (not, as she says, in 1756). See Appendix for the birth-dates of the Hunts.

by her husband," but is full of interesting impressions and memories, that owe little to her mother's record.

"While speaking of John Hunt, Esq., of Watertown, my maternal grandfather, it will be well to say something more particularly of him and his family. The family at this time, consisted of himself, his wife, and four [five] sons and four [five] daughters. His two oldest sons he sent to college at Cambridge, having imbibed and tenaciously adhering through life to the opinion that boys ought to be educated for the good of their country, but girls knew quite enough if they could make a shirt and a pudding; meaning, no doubt, that they were designed by the Creator to be good wives and mothers. John Hunt, his eldest son,¹ soon proved to the satisfaction of all that he had no genius for study. Whether he went through college regularly, I do not know, having never been told. The first I remember of him is that, through his father's influence, he was appointed Sheriff of the County when he married (I don't remember who), but that he had one daughter whom I loved most tenderly, because, being a timid child and apt to be afraid of children, she was the only one at that time who felt for me and would always be kind to me while others laughed at me, or I fancied they did, which was the same thing to me. Her name was Mary Hunt; she outlived her father. William Hunt, the second son, proved more prosperous both in college and after-

¹ Mary later apologizes for the omission of her oldest uncle, Samuel.

wards. He studied law with his father and inherited most of his honors and property, and married two wives. The first and dearly beloved was a Miss Mary Coolidge; she lived to be the mother of one daughter, a beautiful girl, married when rather advanced to Dr. Moore, remembered by some of you, and died. He then married, after some years, Miss Bethune of Newton, by whom he had several children, two sons, William and George, both, if I am not mistaken, lawyers but wild young men. But these cousins I know very little about, and that little not pleasing. The other two sons, my uncles, Thomas and Ephraim, went into the army early in the revolution and both rose to be officers before the struggle ended. After peace was established, Thomas, who had a captain's commission, was appointed to the command of the forces stationed at Michilimackinac. He then married a beautiful girl to whom he had long been attached and took her and his brother John's daughter, Mary, with him. Mary wrote a most interesting account of their journey through the woods, and up rivers and lakes. This letter, I fear, is lost, to my great regret. Uncle Ephraim had enough of fighting, I presume, during the war. At any rate, he married a Miss Catharine Bush, near West Point, and settled as a merchant in the interior of New York. It is many years since I have heard anything of his family. He died many years ago. You must thank yourselves, my dear children, if you get weary of

these items of family history. Uncle Thomas died away at his post on Michilimackinac. Mary, his niece, came home alone; that is, without any friends with her but her Indian guide who brought her safe over rapids in canoes, which they often had to get out of, into the rapid currents, to prevent their being dashed to pieces, while she sat still holding on, praying to Him who rules the waves for protection. She was protected and arrived safely at Watertown, where she was received by her Grandmother Hunt and aunts. I never saw her afterwards. She returned after my removal to Vermont, and she did not long survive her perilous journey. I was told she was so heartily sick of Indian life and society she resolved to run every risk and peril, in order to reach her friends.

“It is time now to return to Grandfather Hunt’s daughters. Mary, his eldest, married a cousin, a Mr. Hunt, and went with him to the West Indies, Barbadoes I think, where they lived till his death. They had no children and I expect he was not very prosperous in business. She was a very accomplished woman, notwithstanding her father’s prejudices, and after her widowhood, in connection with another widow lady, a Mrs. Pierce, kept a boarding school for young ladies in Brattle Square. After some years she married, unfortunately, Dr. Perkins of Bridgewater, who had twelve children, then all young, wild and ungoverned. Perhaps she was tired of school keeping, perhaps in-

fluenced by family connection. His first wife was only sister to the celebrated John Hancock. They had no children; he (Hancock) was very wealthy and the children of the doctor heirs-at-law. Of course the doctor stood a good chance of being guardian, and through them possessor of much of the good things of life, at least so thought my aunt and her relatives generally. The doctor could appear very well in company, and his profession and little farm at Bridgewater, a pleasant village in Massachusetts, was an irresistible temptation to the weary schoolmistress, who, doubtless, had her visions of well educated young gentlemen and ladies growing up under her care; of souls saved by her instructions, and much happiness promoted by placing herself in a situation of so much usefulness. So she married and, after living a life of toil and sorrow, subject to the wayward tempers of ignorant children, and a husband who proved to be very unkind and very poor, she died with that worst affliction of suffering humanity, a cancer. John Hancock lived many years and finally left all his wealth to public institutions by will, but dying suddenly in a fit without signing that iniquitous will, his property was divided among his heirs-at-law. He had a brother, Ebenezer, who was one of those good men who are always unfortunate in business; he had five children who lived to enjoy their Uncle's ill-gotten wealth with the Perkinses. His will only left one hundred dollars each to the doctor's children and five hun-

dred to his only brother who had five children and was really in need. How Pharisaical is such benevolence!

“Catharine, the second daughter, never married. She was a brilliant, fascinating woman and would no doubt have figured with *éclat* in the gay circles in New York and Philadelphia during the first congress of the United States, had she been taught to read and write. While the Committee of Safety sat at Watertown, Elbridge Gerry¹ boarded at my Grandfather Hunt’s and became enamoured with Aunt Kate’s wit and many excellent qualities, and it was always thought by the family that they were actually engaged, but the times were troubled and the country called for all her talented sons, either in the battlefield or the Council Chamber. Mr. Gerry was elected to Congress and was away many months. He arranged a correspondence with Aunt Kate and faithfully performed his part, but alas, Katy, as she was familiarly called, could not answer his letters of several pages. Patiently he continued writing till an interregnum permitted his return. How she excused herself, *I* do not know. He again left home. Still his letters constantly arriving proved his constancy. Again he came home and again went south.

¹ Elbridge Gerry, (1744–1814) whose home and family occupy several pages in the story of Mary Palmer’s girlhood, was successively, delegate to the Continental Congress, signer of the Declaration of Independence, signer of the Articles of Confederation, member of Congress, Minister to France, Vice-President of the United States. As Mary implies, here would have been a great match for Katy Hunt!

My mother offered to write for her, as she was obliged to read his to her, but Kate was too honorable for that. Matters went on for some time. At length no more letters post-free came and in a few months the papers announced the marriage of Elbridge Gerry, Esq., M.C., to Miss Catharine Thompson of New York! This was the first sad fruits of Grandpa's system of female education.¹ Ruth married before this a Dr. Taylor of Pomfret, Connecticut, and soon died. I never saw her to my remembrance. Aunt Sally lived unmarried until after my removal to Vermont."

Madam Tyler's recollections of her grandmother, Ruth (Fessenden) Hunt, show that the Sandwich clergyman's daughter, who had captured her husband by her linen rather than by her learning, sympathized with his "system of female education."

"My grandmother often lectured me and others on our waste of time because we would read while tending baby brothers and sisters, boasting that her time was better employed: 'When I used to tend my brother Tommy, (afterwards the Rev. Thomas Fessenden of Walpole) I used to put him down between my feet, giving him playthings, and so then I could go on with my sewing.' I had many a cry about it, but my mother, having been better taught, always took my part, so that at length Grandma concluded to leave us to our own

¹ "Female education in the best families went no farther than writing and arithmetic. I never was sent to any school." (Abigail Adams.)

ways, and no doubt trembled for the industry of the rising generation."

Now comes the story of another meeting of lovers who are closer and more congenial to us than these of the earlier generation, not only because this young man and young woman have greater charm and intelligence than their elders, but because they are the "Father" and "Mother" of Mary Palmer's memories. Elizabeth Hunt was only fourteen when, in 1769, Joseph Pearse Palmer came into her life. In pleasing contrast to the narrowness of John Hunt is the eagerness of this Harvard youth of nineteen to repair the deficiencies of his lady's training:—

["I attended the district schools, but never made much proficiency until after I became acquainted with my future husband. It was a maxim of my father's that it was sufficient for a woman to know enough to make a shirt and a pudding. My sisters kept me back and did not like to have me go into company. One day they were invited to a party at the college. There was a certain Mr. Parsons,¹ who had a particular favor for me, and he came with a horse and chaise, and tried to get me to go, but I could not, for I was not provided

¹ David Parsons and Israel Keith were, like Joseph Pearse Palmer, members of the class of 1771 at Harvard. Parsons became a clergyman and died in 1823. Col. Keith, who continued his college friendship with Palmer, died in 1819. His valuable letters of the Revolutionary period (some of them to Palmer) remain, unprinted, in the State Library of New York at Albany.

with the wherewithal to wear. He took tea with me and invited me to a water party. Through his influence I was prepared to be brought out. I had set my heart on going with Parsons, and was not a little vexed when, instead of him, there came a smart looking young man, dressed in a green coat, with stockings and small clothes, as was the fashion of the day. I had a great mind not to go, but, on the whole, concluded that I would. I trembled, however, with vexation as he led me to the chaise. This was Joseph Pearse Palmer, my husband afterwards. The first question he asked me was, 'What books have you read?' 'None at all, sir,' said I, 'except "The Spectator."' '“The Spectator” is a very good work,' said he, 'but your reading should be more extensive. I have a large library at college which shall be at your service.' The conversation was so wholly different from anything I had ever heard or expected, that I was quite pleased with him.

“When we got to the seashore, my first beau, Parsons, came to me and, laying his head familiarly in my lap, said, 'Ah, Betsey, I am sorry you were so disappointed and had to ride all the way with a stranger.' 'You may restrain your grief,' said I, 'for I like him better than any of the rest of the company.' We went down to Long Island, in Boston Harbor, in a large pleasure boat. I remember Mr. Palmer was at one end of the boat and I was at the other, when he laid a wager of a

bottle of Madeira with a Mr. Keith, a classmate and chum of his, that he (Keith) dared not go and kiss me. He immediately took him at his offer, and coming to me, said, 'You are Miss Betsey Hunt, I believe,' and, without more words, gave me a hearty smack. I was exceedingly affronted, and never learned the reason of the thing until long afterwards. We had a fine time and danced all day (Mr. Palmer was a fine dancer), and returned home in a thunder-storm in the evening. After this Mr. Palmer used to visit me every week, and bring me books to read, which I was obliged to do up garret, for my sisters were much opposed to my reading at all. The first book he brought me was 'Sir Charles Grandison.'" E. H. P.]

And this is the daughter's version of her father's wooing:—

"And now comes on my mother's courtship and marriage, which I believe most of you have heard from her own lips; at any rate, Pickman has it written down in a book from her dictation, and it would be almost wicked for me to attempt it after her. Suffice it here to say my father was an only and beloved son, one of the purest spirits who ever lived and died in this wicked world. He was sent to college before the Revolution, and, while there, became acquainted with my mother and while her father lived and was one of the leading members of the Assembly in Boston. I do not know how it came about, but during some of the political

squabbles, Grandfather [General Palmer] became much prejudiced against him [John Hunt] and, when he first discovered that his son had become deeply enamoured of one of the celebrated Miss Hunts, who were known as the Watertown beauties, he interfered his paternal authority and tried to break off the acquaintance. But the son protested, promised to be good and wait patiently till he had taken his degree, but entered and obtained permission to visit at the house, a permission no doubt easier obtained owing to the extreme youth of the damsel—only fourteen—while the young man had just attained the respectable age of nineteen. He soon discovered the deficient education of his charmer, and set out seriously to amend the only fault she had in his eyes. He gave her regular weekly lessons in writing, arithmetic and so forth, and as she, of course, made rapid improvement under such a teacher, geography, history and so forth were added. You will wonder how opportunity was found for such extensive instruction. The truth is, the lessons were often oral and given while the happy pair were taking an afternoon ride or walk; and all teachers will bear witness of the facility with which pupils imbibe wisdom when the will is engaged and the instructor beloved. The mother was pleased with the modest young man, and the rigid fathers were too ardent politicians to trouble themselves often by looking too critically into the domestic affairs.

“It is time now, to see how our youthful students progress in learning and more interesting affairs. My mother told me that she was soon able to read and write tolerably so as to compose a decent letter. The distance from the college was so slight and his frequent visits prevented much literary correspondence between them, but, as soon as he thought her far enough advanced, he made his sisters, who lived thirteen miles from Watertown, call and see her when they visited him. Once introduced, a great friendship sprung up, a correspondence ensued, and soon the parents yielded to their daughters’ solicitations and invited her to make them a visit, resolving to see the little country girl who had so bewitched their son, before consenting to any engagement. According, after coaxing her own father some time, he consented, and the ardent lover had the happiness of bringing a carriage and escorting his beloved to the paternal mansion. Grandfather Palmer, who never did a kind thing by halves, had prepared himself to give her a kind welcome, but, when he saw her sweet blushing face and timid air, opened his arms wide and clasping her to his heart, exclaimed, ‘Welcome, my dear child, welcome home!’ said she brought his son’s excuse in her face, and the sooner he brought her home for good the better. This was a true picture of his warm, honest, English heart. All the rest of the family, mother and two daughters, joined in the welcome and she spent several weeks there at that time.”

Of General Palmer, his son and daughters, Mary tells us much, although her memory of dates is admittedly at fault:

“And to prove my forgetfulness, I do not recollect, if I ever heard, in what year of the seventeenth (eighteenth) century my Grandfather Palmer arrived in Boston from England, his native place, but I have often heard the family say my father was born the next week so that he always gloried in being born in America and loved to tease his sisters in revolutionary times about being born in Old England, which they did not deserve, being heartily patriotic on the side of American liberty.”¹

¹ The life of Gen. Joseph Palmer is told with due regard for dates and names from material collected by his great-grandson, Charles S. Palmer, in a magazine edited by another great-grandson, Mary Palmer Tyler's son, Edward R. Tyler, *The New Englander*, July, 1845. This sketch, some of which is reproduced by Pattee, *History of Old Braintree & Quincy*, Quincy, 1878, pp. 486-490, makes large use of Elizabeth Hunt Palmer's manuscript. The general, born early in the eighteenth century (March 31, 1716) in the parish of Shaugh, Devonshire, was of the Pearses on his mother's side, hence his son's middle name. “A man of good education and fine manners, he emigrated to America in 1746, bringing with him the late venerable and highly respected Judge Richard Cranch, then a youth of twenty years, whose sister, Mary (of Brood in the parish of Ermington, Devonshire) he had married. His elder daughter, Elizabeth, the ‘Aunt Betsey’ of Mary Palmer's book, was evidently born in England. The younger, Mary, the ‘Polly Palmer’ whose pathetic tale is narrated at length by her niece, was baptized at ‘the church in Brattle Square,’ Feb. 2, 1747. Hence Mary's statement that she was born overseas, though possibly true, is probably as unfounded as her belief that her father was born ‘the week after the family's arrival in Boston.’” Joseph Pearse Palmer was born four years after this migration, on July 31, 1750. He was therefore twenty-one at the time of his graduation from Harvard in 1771. (Temple, *History of Framingham*, 1887, p. 657).

“Gen. Palmer had purchased, when he first came to this country, a large farm in Braintree, now Quincy, and bringing over with him a number of Germans, skilled in making glass bottles of all capacities, set up a large round building, and set his Germans at work making glass. They called their place Germantown and set to work building themselves dwellings.¹ Our grandfather built for himself an elegant house for those early times.² The farm was situated on a kind of peninsula almost surrounded by the waters of Neponset river. Lighters and other small sailboats passed constantly to and from Boston. The farm was well wooded and soon became a perfect garden under his English skill and energy. His first misfortune occurred just as his house was completed. His family inhabited a small house near the river where, in after years, my parents lived after children began to multiply. The new home was built about the distance, according to my recollection, of mine, where I now live, from the banks of the

¹ Gen. Joseph Palmer and Mr. Richard Cranch leased, August 27, 1752, land in Germantown and began building operations by constructing chocolate mills, spermacetti and glass works, salt factories, etc. Pattee (p. 416) gives in full the indenture between the German company and Palmer and Cranch. Cranch sold out to Palmer in 1760.

² *The New Englander* article (July, 1845) dwells upon the activities and hospitalities of “Friendship Hall,” as the General’s house was deservedly called. A part of the mansion was still standing in 1878 (Pattee, *History of Old Braintree*, etc., p. 476), but a recent visit to Sailors’ Snug Harbor, which occupies the site, discovered no trace of the Palmer dwelling. Yet the delightful surroundings confirm in part the pleasant story of the worthy life once lived on these wide acres.

Connecticut. It happened one day, as I have been told, that the master was obliged to chastise pretty severely a boy he had taken to bring up. It was a doubt who suffered most, the master or the boy, for if ever the milk of human kindness predominated in any bosom, it was in my grandfather's. Many complaints had reached him of the idleness and untrustworthiness of this boy. Now he thought it his duty to put in force the oft repeated threat of punishment, and came home at night almost tired to death from overlooking the workmen, who had that afternoon given three hearty cheers because the house was finished in every part, and he paid and dismissed them. He told his family that tomorrow they must begin to clean it out, when they would remove in as soon as they pleased and he hoped they would enjoy the fruits of his labors. But, alas, how soon were these hopes disappointed! That night they were awakened by the awful cry of "Fire!" Their beautiful house was enveloped in flames and was soon a heap of ashes. It had cost him a large sum of money, for labor and materials were not so easily gathered together as now. It was also a sad disappointment. Then, as now, the inquiry was made, who could have set the fire? There had been no fire in the building. Some one must have been there after Grandfather left the evening before. No one about the premises plead guilty. Where was the unfortunate boy who had been punished? Nowhere to be found,

nor did I ever hear of his being seen there afterwards. Of course he was the incendiary, so said the public opinion. He was an orphan boy and, although my grandfather made every possible search and inquiry, it was all in vain. The loss of such a house was great, but the distress as to what had become of the boy was far worse to bear, and made his master quite unhappy for a long time. Nevertheless, he proceeded to build again but I was frequently told the house was not equal to the other, although I used to think it magnificent. It was three stories high, four large rooms on each floor, besides a boudoir at the south and west corners for each of his daughters.

“Aunt Polly was, after my remembrance, a confirmed invalid, although tradition says she was the beauty and also the most talented one of the family. Her father used to relate marvels of her courage and perseverance and said, ‘although they lived thirteen miles from Boston through woods and uninhabited roads, she would take his horse and chaise in the morning while he was busy with his workmen on his farm, and go that distance alone when sixteen and seventeen years old, call on various gentlemen and transact any business he entrusted her with, often paying or receiving money, and return after dark frequently, and laugh at her mother and sister’s fears on her account.’ She was also quite a literary genius. In short, her father doted upon her and was exceedingly proud of her. Her health at this

time was as perfect as he fancied her in all other respects. No weather ever deterred her from going to town, as it was called, if her father wished. Thus she continued till eighteen or nineteen. About that time her father, who was a real English sportsman as well as farmer, and whose own woods and fields furnished ample game, had been out all day with his friend, Col. Quincy,¹ hunting, had returned in the afternoon for rest and refreshment. They sat in the parlor chatting when, looking out of the window, they perceived Polly reclining on the grass directly under the window, deeply absorbed in a book. Her father, as usual, began his wonted praises of his pet, telling of her wondrous strength of nerve. 'She is not afraid of anything. Why, Colonel! she can fire off a gun as well as you can.' 'Nevertheless,' said the colonel, 'I could frighten her. I'll bet you any wager you please, if you will give me leave.' 'Well, you can try but you will find her proof, I can tell you.' No sooner said than the colonel stepped across the room, took up his gun which stood loaded in a corner, and fired it off out of the window under which the unconscious girl lay. She sprung up, but fainted and fell immediately. The gentlemen both rushed to her assistance, but, alas, one

¹ Col. Josiah Quincy, son of Edmund Quincy, was born at Braintree, 1707, was graduated at Harvard, 1728, and was for many years a merchant in Boston. In 1755, he negotiated with Pennsylvania and New York for assistance against the French at Ticonderoga. He retired in 1756, and resided on his estate in Braintree until his death in 1784.

fit after another followed all night. A physician was summoned as fast as the fastest horse could go and return three miles to the nearest village, but a wreck, a sad wreck, was made. Ever after, the slightest noise alarmed her. The sight of a gun would bring on fits, and even after I knew her, the whole family were obliged to move on velvet. Children might play out of doors, but, when within, all their amusements must be quiet, lest they should disturb Aunt Polly. If it thundered, she shut herself up in the darkest and closest room and was in misery until the shower was over. Her boasted nervous system was ruined forever. May it be a warning to all who are disposed to find amusement in frightening others! The colonel never forgave himself, and her father,—think of the anguish whenever he saw his bright blooming daughter rendered miserable and useless for life! At this time his son was at school and college. Soon the political troubles began and almost absorbed all others.”

Mary Palmer tells with great gusto of the connection of Gen. Palmer’s brother-in-law and business associate, Richard Cranch, with another resident of Braintree, who was later to become famous and the ancestor of a famous family, John Adams. These are pre-Adamite days and the great man first appears in the humble rôle of “the shoemaker’s son”;

“I have said my Grandfather Palmer came from England some years before the Revolution. He was

accompanied by his wife's brother, Richard Cranch, Esq. who also purchased an estate in Quincy, (then Braintree); he was a young man of some property. Braintree was a pretty village twelve miles from Boston. Here was born the celebrated John Adams, afterward Ambassador to Great Britain and still later, President of the United States. His father was a shoemaker in that village, a poor but worthy man. His talented son eagerly improved his time at the village schools and in due time studied law and settled in his native town. He soon rose to eminence and the times were such as to bring into notice all who had talents. A few miles from Braintree was another village, Weymouth, whose minister, the Reverend Mr. Smith, had three daughters who early attracted the attention of Richard Cranch, John Adams and the Reverend Mr. Peabody, afterwards settled at Andover many years. Mr. Cranch and Mr. Peabody were civilly received as suitors by the Reverend Father and in due time married the two eldest daughters, but the shoemaker's son did not speed so well. His horse must stand tethered to the post all the evening while those of the other gentlemen were well housed and fed from the ample stalls of the reverend host. For, in those days, many of the clergy, while they ministered to the spiritual necessities of their flocks, were owners of good farms and always found willing hearts and ready hands to assist in storing their abundant harvests. So it was with the

Reverend Dr. Smith. His family consisted of these three daughters and an only son. It is among my earliest recollections being taken with my mother to Weymouth, visiting the old lady and gentleman who were then living alone, but ever hospitable and glad to see their friends. He would stroke my head and ask me the stereotyped questions, If I was a good girl, went to school and said my prayers? His hair was white as snow and hung in thin locks about his neck and ample forehead. But I am treating the shoemaker's son almost as uncivilly as Mr. Smith's hostler did his horse a hundred years ago. There is a pretty anecdote about the same horse and his master, which I would relate did my memory serve me, especially as an apt quotation of scripture from his beautiful and gifted daughter, Abigail,¹ about the time John Adams was almost hopelessly urging his suit, softened her father's heart and finally he gave consent and they were married and settled in Braintree near his sister, who, a short time before, had married my uncle, Richard Cranch, Esq. Mr. Cranch had two daughters and one son,

¹ Here Madam Tyler shows a vague recollection of the story (preserved by Pattee, p. 491) of two sermons of the Rev. William Smith of Weymouth. One on the marriage of his daughter, Mary, to Richard Cranch in 1762 was based on Luke (X, 42,) "And Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken from her." The other discourse met the prejudices against Abigail's suitor, John Adams, lawyer and son of a small farmer in Braintree, by an expansion of another verse from Luke (VII, 33) "For John came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, 'He hath a devil.'"

afterwards Chief Justice of the United States¹ in the days and under the patronage of the shoemaker's son, then President of the United States! How much stranger than fiction are the real events of life! But I go on too fast. I should tell what a perfect character this young Richard was. It used to be said of him that he was one of those boys who always did right from instinct almost. He did not, I believe, have what is called a liberal education but studied law in his Uncle Adams' office and there laid the foundation of his future greatness. I was never acquainted with him or his family and never heard whom he married. His sisters were smart girls, and the eldest, Elizabeth, would have been glad at one time to have married your father, but more of this hereafter. Lucy, the youngest and most amiable of the two, married—I have forgotten his name—a famous musician in Boston who was perfectly blind. Mr. Adams's family consisted of four sons and a daughter."²

With this knowledge of the Palmers and their home ties and connections, we must turn once more to the

¹ William Cranch, whom M. P. T. calls "Richard," (1769-1855), a graduate from Harvard in the same class as his cousin, J. Q. Adams (1787), became Chief Judge of the Circuit Court of the District of Columbia. He married Nancy Greenleaf. His sister Lucy (1767-1846) married in 1796 this lady's brother, John Greenleaf, "blind from his youth but proficient on the organ and other musical instruments." (Pattee, p. 240.)

² This daughter, a second Abigail (Abby), and her famous mother play not too gracious rôles in our later story.

son of the family, Joseph Pearse, whom we left busily wooing Elizabeth Hunt of Watertown. That lady thus tells the story of their marriage:

[“On the second day of Nov. 1772, very early in the morning, I started off for Hampton, N. H., to be married, for the relations of the family were so numerous we thought it best to escape a wedding at home. We went in a coach and four. Our party consisted of myself and Mr. Palmer, my sisters, Ruth and Katy, and Mr. Keith. At Newburyport we found a number of the connections of the family who invited us to their houses and made a splendid escort to our place of destination. We arrived at Hampton between eleven and twelve o’clock, where we had an elegant dinner. Our party was quite large and I was the youngest person in the room. This was at Sandborn’s Tavern. We went for the clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Wingate,¹ to perform the ceremony. This was done at two o’clock. I was married in my riding habit. This was made of silk calmet, light colored, trimmed with silver lace, vest of blue satin, the little spencer, which, according to the fashion of those days, set close to the body, sleeves and all, and was turned over as to the lapels, with blue satin. We returned to Newburyport where we found a splendid supper prepared for us at Col. Farman’s house. While I was sitting at table, some-

¹ Rev. Paine Wingate was the pastor of the Hampton Falls Church, 1763–1776 (Dow, *History of Hampton*, N. H., p. 390).

one tapped me on the shoulder and asked me to come out a moment. I went and found a horse and chaise ready to take me and my husband down to Mrs. Sawyer's where we went, leaving the company in the lurch, and there we slept. On our return home, we arrived at Salem on the evening of a great assembly. We received cards of invitation. I had the honor of opening the ball with a son of Gov. Hutchinson. My dress at this time, was a sky blue lutestring negligée, which style of dress those who are familiar with those times will remember but I cannot describe to your comprehension." E.H.P.]

The daughter's account of this wedding and its festivities adds interesting comment:

"My father's graduating term drew nigh and he spent much of the time at home and it was arranged that father and son should immediately make preparations to go into mercantile business together, my father being made active partner. They had wealthy connections in England and went into wholesale trade. Their stores, two large buildings, were situated on Long Wharf.¹ And of course, as soon as my father

¹ The Palmer trade in spermacetti candles finds not only commercial, but, after the fashion of "royal merchants," artistic and genealogical expression in the wonderful shop-bill executed by Nat. Hurd, an eminent gold-smith and engraver who died in 1777. In our photostat of the original, preserved by the Mass. Hist. Society, it will be seen that the pure oil of the product "made by Joseph Palmer & Co. at Germantown near Boston, to be sold at their store in Boston, New England" is guaranteed by a spouting sperm whale, admirably drawn, and the pure

had taken his degree and all these arrangements were completed the wedding must come off, for the father was impatient if his dear Betsey (as he always called her) was long absent from his house. I do not know, not having been present, how long a time intervened, but as Betsey was fourteen when we first introduced her, and was married one month after she was sixteen,¹ we have reason to suppose all reasonable haste was made. If I could get at the journal Pickman has, written from her own mouth related in her own vivacious manner, it would be well worth reading the account of the wedding,—how they made up a party and went to Newburyport to be married, her elegant riding habit and side saddle and so forth, all presents from Mr. Palmer. Her sister, Kate, and several other ladies were of the party, besides several gentlemen. Foster Candy, Paul Revere, Israel Keith, others whose names I have forgotten. And then the bridal dress, blue satin negligée, tastefully trimmed and so forth. I will not spoil your treat when you can read out of Pickman's book so much richer dainties both for soul and body than I can possibly recollect. They took supper, after which they had a splendid ball.

blood of the producers attested by the well-known arms of the Palmers of Wanlip, Leicestershire, evidently the parent-house of the Devonshire family. In old Boston as in old Venice "the merchants were the kings."

¹ Elizabeth Hunt was one month after seventeen (not "sixteen") at the time of her marriage. For this mistake of her daughter's the mother herself was responsible (above).

You will there find who she danced that first dance with, and how many compliments were paid her and how her husband excelled all his acquaintance in dancing the fashionable hornpipe. This was the beginning of a life of sorrow and trials such as few people in our happy country, who begin the world with such hopeful prospects, experience. At this time both families were, although not rich, in easy circumstances."

The early married life of the young Palmers is colored by the husband's part in an historical incident of romantic appeal, "The Boston Tea Party." Elizabeth thus tells the story of that thrilling little prelude to the Revolution:

["Mr. Palmer was a merchant in Boston; and, after boarding at my father's house in Watertown a few weeks, we commenced keeping house in Sherden's Lane, (Shrimpton Lane).¹

"When the troubles began to break out between the mother-country and her colonies, my husband was a high Whig. In August, 1773, my first child (Joseph) was born. In the month of November following, one evening about ten o'clock I was sitting rocking the baby when I heard the gate and door open. I supposed my husband was just returning from his club and so I opened the parlor door and there stood three stout

¹ Shrimpton Lane, so named in Bonner's Map of Boston, 1722, ran out of State Street (old King Street) not far from Long Wharf, where the Palmers did business. It was earlier (1646) known as Exchange Street.

Indians. I screamed out and would have fainted of very fright, had I not recognized my husband's voice saying: 'Don't be frightened, Betsey, it is I. We have only been making a little salt water tea.' His companions were Foster Candy¹ and Stephen Bruce, and they had been making way with the tea in the three British ships. Soon after this, Secretary Fluker called upon my husband and said to him, 'Joe, you are so obnoxious to the British Government that you had better leave town. You can take your personal property but none of your goods.' Accordingly, we left town, and went to live in a part of my father's house at Watertown.²" E.H.P.]

Mary Palmer Tyler's account is, as usual, more elaborate, more "literary," but surely not more effective than her mother's first-hand recollection. Like Falstaff's men in buckram, "the three stout Indians" grow to "five tall Indians in full dress—plumes nodding in lofty crests":

"But I must return to my parents who were married, November second, 1772. They went to live immediately in Boston, times began to be troublesome. The

¹ James Foster Candy, was a bookseller in Boston before the Revolution doing business in Union St. "opposite the Cornfields." He died in Haverhill, Mass., in 1809. Another attendant at the Palmer-Hunt wedding, the famous Paul Revere, (1735-1818) was also one of the "Indians."

² Elizabeth's account of the tea-party is reproduced both in the memoir of Gen. Joseph Palmer in *The New Englander*, July, 1845, p. 3, and, through this medium, in F. S. Drake's *Tea Leaves*, 1884, p. cxxxviii.

insane conduct of the Mother Country filled all true hearts with anxiety. Many who had come to America within comparatively recent times had left dear friends there and were unwilling to believe the government in earnest with their threats. Not even the massacre in Boston could open their eyes. Among such was my grandfather, and it took some time to arouse him to that righteous indignation which afterwards induced him and my father to sacrifice all for the good of their adopted country. Before his marriage, my father opened his stores on Long Wharf, where he continued to transact business for two years afterwards. Difficulties increased, the Home Government continued their provocations. The Stamp Act, the Boston Massacre and so forth began to arouse a spirit among our people which could never be allayed. The tea ships arrived about this time. The people were resolved not to have them enter the custom house, but they were consigned to Gov. Hutchinson. What could be done?

“Several determined spirits resolved what to do. I have often heard my mother tell the thrilling story and its sad effects to her. She knew there had been a private meeting on the subject that day, and was sitting alone by the cradle of my oldest brother, her heart beating at every footfall which approached the house. At length the door-bell rang. She had sent her servant to bed as it was late, so, with hesitation, she went to the door and, opening it cautiously, there stood on the

steps five tall Indians in full dress, plumes nodding in lofty crests. She screamed and turned to run when my father's voice arrested her: 'Don't be frightened, Bessie. It is only friends.' They then came in, as my father said, to take a glass of wine with her before they went to the wharf where many trusty fellows were waiting for them. It seems they were chosen a committee to direct stronger and equally ready hands what to do with the governor's tea. What they did do is known to all. I do not remember the names of his associate Indians. A day or two afterwards, my father received private notice from the Governor's private secretary that his name was on the Black List, as it was called, and that he would be arrested on suspicion of being one of the Tea Party. This secretary himself was a friend to the great cause, besides being a personal friend to my father, and was very earnest that he should remove with his family out of town that very day and make arrangements to have his property sent after him as soon as possible, and offering every facility in his power. Here was trouble. My father, with high chivalrous notions of honor, refused to go at first, but his friend represented the folly of exposing himself to the vengeance of such a man as Hutchinson who would not hesitate to send him home as a traitor. Finally he went to his store and packed two large trunks of nice English goods, and sent them to his wife, saying there was no knowing what would be done and

she had better keep those against a rainy day. But, when she opened the trunks and saw the quantities of nice goods, she had (as she said) a foolish question of conscience come over her, as it would be injuring somebody else, and so sent one trunk back to her husband. There was no time to dispute the matter, the teams were at her door loading her household goods and her husband had agreed to be there early in the evening to take her and babe into the country to her father's. That night his stores were burnt down by British soldiers and plundered of everything. Thus did one misfortune after another follow in quick succession.

“After the sorrowful events last related of my father's losing all his property by fire in Boston and his being driven from town as a suspected traitor, he found that he had awakened so much enmity in high places there, it would be in vain to attempt returning till the troubles were all over. Although never arrested, he had evidence that the friendship of Hutchinson's secretary was the cause of turning away suspicion in some degree and, for his sake, he avoided making any complaint that might ‘involve his friend.’”

CHAPTER II

DURING THE REVOLUTION (1775-1783)

Birth of Mary Palmer. Battles and bloodshed—Mary “in arms” at Lexington—before and after the fight—Bunker Hill and Gen. Warren’s farewell. Revolutionary episodes. Early childhood of Mary Palmer—brothers and sisters. Life at Germantown—sport in stone-house—the rescue of the children—visit to Col. Quincy—Mary’s adventure with Betsey Palmer—Betsey Palmer and the two Cranches—education of the children—arrival of French officers—salt-works at Germantown—the general’s guests—friends and visits. Famous dark day at the Palmers’ Boston home. The coming of peace.

OUR first chapter has been drawn from those pages of the Palmer memoirs that have to do with the grandparents and parents of the writer of *Grandmother Tyler’s Book*. In the second chapter, mother and daughter again appear in close company—this time as historians of Mary’s infancy and early childhood. Our lady, who survived by a year the Civil War, was a month older than the War of Independence and hence was literally “in arms” during its first battles. How did that great struggle affect her little life? Listen first to the elder woman’s story:

[“At my father’s house at Watertown, on the first of March, 1775, my second child, Mary, was born. When

Dr. Spring brought her to me, he said, 'Here is the prettiest creature which was ever born into the world.' And truly she was a beautiful child, and never cried at all. My Father Hunt was now an invalid and lived in the house with us. He had had, some time before, a turn of bleeding at the nose until he was nearly dead, and of which he never recovered. My mother was also there. My husband was Quartermaster General and my Father Palmer was a member of the committee of safety.

"On the night of the eighteenth of April, I heard the drum beat; I waked Mr. Palmer and said, 'My dear, I hear the drum.' He was out of bed with the rapidity of a bullet from a gun and, while he was dressing, his father entered and said, 'My son, we must ride, I have received an express. Three men lie dead at Lexington.' My husband was off in an instant. I entreated the old gentleman not to go, but he would not stay. He told me that there would probably be another brigade along soon and that I had better remove out of the way. They had their horses saddled and their pistols loaded in the barn, for they expected some sudden alarm. They were gone immediately. I never saw anything more of them until the next night at ten o'clock.

"In the meantime, I sent my father and mother with my horse and chaise to a Mr. Gibbs' in Newton. Afterwards I took my children and went to the home of Mr.

Pigeon in another part of Newton, and there I took possession of his premises which were vacant, he having fled farther from the scene of strife. Here I waited anxiously for the return of my husband and father. I had begun to despair when they galloped up to the house. They had ridden all day and my husband had completely ruined a beautiful horse he had given me as a bridal present called 'Rising Sun.'¹ (My father (Gen. Palmer) was nearly killed by this day of toil. He had to be lifted from his horse and was borne into the house and laid on the parlor floor. He was so exhausted as to be unable to speak or move, and it was many hours, under the most judicious treatment, before he showed any encouraging signs of animation.)" E.H.P.]

The daughter's derived version of the tale of Lexington and the attendant troubles is more detailed:

"My earliest recollection of those spirit-stirring times is of standing at my mother's elbow and listening with a beating heart to her account of Lexington Battle. Turning to me she would say, 'This little girl was five or six weeks old² that morning when my Father (Hunt)

¹ The sentences in parentheses are derived from *The New Englander* sketch of Gen. Palmer, (July 1845), which reproduces a more complete version of Elizabeth's book than our defective typewritten copy.

² In 1811, nearly half a century before the penning of these memoirs, Mary Tyler had dedicated "To her Mother" her "Maternal Physician," with the gratitude of "that helpless babe, which reposed on your affrighted bosom, when you fled the vicinity of Boston on the day of the ever-memorable battle of Lexington."

rode hastily up to the door and, jumping hastily from his horse, rushed into the house exclaiming, "Bessy, you must take up the children and fly to some of the back towns; the British are on to Concord, there is no safety for you here." "Where shall we go? Where is my Father Palmer and my husband?" "They are gone to give the alarm. John, get the chaise ready to take the children to Newton. Your friend, Mrs. Pinchon (Pigeon),¹ will give you shelter until this alarm is over. You women must employ yourselves in preparing lint and bandages for the soldiers, there will be bloody work before night, but keep up good courage." Besides myself and two babies, one not two years old and the other six weeks old, Maria Farnham, who was visiting me at my father's, accompanied me to Newton, about two miles from Watertown, where we lived, that is, my Grandfather Hunt's family lived, with whom my mother was then living. We soon arrived safely at Mr. Pinchon's, but lo, and behold! the family, alarmed at the rumors flying about, had fled farther back into the country, leaving their doors open, as was customary then, so we took possession. By this time, the country was aroused. Men with guns in their hands were running in all directions, and some officers, who were trying to organize them a little, called upon us

¹ Pigeon, as in E. H. P.'s version, is the proper spelling of this name. "John Pigeon of Newton" appears repeatedly in the *Journals of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts of 1774-1775* (published, 1838). He was clerk of the committee of safety.

and urged us to have something cooked for the poor fellows who should survive this day. They would return, probably wounded and hungry, for there had been no time to provide for them, such had been the hasty movements of our treacherous foe. Accordingly I, knowing so well the sentiments of Mr. Pinchon and his wife, hung over the large kitchen fire a five pail kettle we found there, and, going into the cellar, found barrels of excellent pork and beef and vegetables of all kinds that the season afforded, with which we filled our kettle and set it boiling, and well it was we did so, for, long before night, the poor fellows began to return in a dreadful plight, hungry and dirty and weary, some so exhausted as to lie down on the floor and around the door, unable to stand. From them I learned, after they were refreshed a little, that the day had been a dreadful one; many brave fellows dead or dying, "but we beat the rascals, and have driv them back to Boston." "But my father and husband, where are they?" said I. "What? General Palmer and the Colonel?" (He was general of brigade that day and my father aide to him.) "Oh, they have had a dreadful fatiguing day, but they must be here soon." It was ten o'clock, however, before they came. They rode up to the door, scarcely able to sit their horses and quite unable to dismount without assistance, which was cheerfully given by several of those who had already rested and partaken of our beef and pork. Two of them helped my

father from his horse, who begged them to lay him on the floor before the fire for his limbs were so cramped he could not stand, nor was my husband so much better off. They had both been in the saddle from daylight till then, riding all the time, especially my husband who was aide to his father, and who ruined my beautiful saddle horse, Rising Sun, which he had bought on purpose for me to learn to ride. It was never good for anything afterwards.'

"The history of that day is so familiar that my mother's recollections would be trite. My Grandfather Palmer was an enthusiastic friend to the American cause¹ and one of the greatest sufferers, without having even an acknowledgement of them as his reward from those who best knew his losses. But he is now gone to a richer reward and we will dismiss this episode and return to the 'times which tried men's souls' and my childhood. I may as well add that my mother and her friend, Miss F., spent the day, while the kettle was boiling, scraping lint. They received messages almost hourly from the battle field, and solicitations for more lint and bandages, for which they tore up garments,

¹ The Journals of the Provincial Congress, above referred to, bear frequent testimony to Gen. Joseph Palmer's activity. A permanent member of the committee of safety, he won the thanks of Congress for his "wisdom, fortitude and temperance." Letters from Washington, John and Samuel Adams, Elbridge Gerry and Joseph Warren (*New Englander*, July, 1845) attest his importance as a general officer. His son, Joseph Pearse Palmer, acted with him during the early part of the war, first as brigade major and then as quartermaster general.

table cloths, towels and so forth, anything my Grandmother Hunt's ample stores provided. Nothing was withheld which was called for, nor were their house or stores more free than those of all the country round. John, who tackled the chaise 'to carry the children' to Newton, went back and forth continually all that day, carrying and bringing messages from Grandfather Hunt, who, being one of the committee of safety, was able to keep the ladies informed as well as any one could of the progress of events; while my grandmother, Ruth Fessenden formerly, and her unmarried daughters, Catherine, Ruth and Sally, were themselves also employed in acts of hospitality and mercy to officers and men who were constantly passing and repassing through that eventful day when, by British orders, the first blood was shed in battle between those who were brother Christians and ought to love each other."

Mrs. Palmer's reminiscence of Bunker Hill has a pathetic interest through its intimate account of the last hours of General Joseph Warren:

["I used to go down to Watertown every day and, on the fifteenth of June following, I met General Warren for the last time. He had been our family physician and I am sure, next to my husband, I liked him better than anybody. He was a handsome man and wore a tie wig; he had a fine color in his face and light blue eyes. He dined with us and, while at dinner, said to me: 'Come, my little girl, drink a glass of wine with me

for the last time, for I am going on the Hill tomorrow and I shall never come off.' The next day I rose very early and could distinctly hear the cannon on Bunker's Hill and see the smoke of burning Charlestown. I hastened to Watertown to learn the news. Gen'l Warren's servant met me in front of our house, and seeing my horses, he said, as the tears ran down his cheeks: 'Ah, Missee, Missee! The devils have killed my master.' I saw Dr. John Warren, brother of the general. He was much affected and gave me all the papers he could collect that had belonged to his brother."¹ E.H.P.]

The personal touch is everywhere present in Elizabeth Palmer's other recollections of the Revolution:

["I spent most of the summer at a little farmhouse on the estate of Mr. Pigeon. My husband was still engaged in discharging the duties of quarter-master general. General Lee,² during this summer, took up his head-

¹ See Henry Burnham's sketch of Brattleboro in *The Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, V. 86: "We heard near 1830 the aged Mrs. Palmer relate the story. She said: 'My husband was an early associate and intimate friend of Joseph Warren, therefore we, with others of his friends, were invited to dine with him, as he said, for the last time'. Beautiful in her old age, seemingly as Madame Recamier, with swimming eyes and trembling lips, she continued: 'Joseph Warren was an ardent patriot, an accomplished scholar, elegant in manners, universally beloved, and was the idol of Boston. After dinner we all and each begged and prayed that he would not go to the battlefield, but vainly did we try to move him; he firmly believed the cause demanded the sacrifice of his life, and he must obey that demand. Amidst the flames, constant roar of artillery and panic-stricken inhabitants, I fled from the city with my little Mary crying and clinging to my bosom'."

² Charles Lee was born in Wales in 1731. He was a brave officer in the British army during the French and Indian Wars. He settled in

quarters at an old shell of a house between Charlestown and Cambridge which, with characteristic eccentricity, he called 'Hobgoblin Hall.' Here he invited the Watertown ladies to a dinner party. We went. I rode down on horseback. The general took our things and received us very politely. He was a rather small man with a long nose and a sharp face, and withal I thought he did not look much like a general. Although the house looked as if it was about to fall down around our ears, yet the dinner was very fine. At the head of the table was a huge rump of beef, just enough corned to be said to be corned and no more, boiled rare, so as to be rich and juicy. It was excellent. Of this I made the principal part of my dinner. There was a potato pudding in the middle of the table, and a number of side dishes which I have forgotten. Among them was a breast of mutton which the general said was barbecued. For the second course we had musk-melons, water-melons and all other fruits of the season in great abundance.

"During the year '75, General Washington was appointed to the command of the Continental Army. I remember that Mr. Palmer and myself went to Cambridge the next day after his arrival and that we saw the general and his wife standing in the door of their

Virginia in 1773, and was one of the first brigadiers of the Continental army appointed by Congress. His sorry part at Monmouth merited the hot rebuke of Washington. His ambition and perversity of temper finally caused his ruin. He died in Philadelphia, 1782.

house. She was a little woman. The army was now reorganized. Washington offered my husband the office he had held, but he promoted Gen. Mifflin over him, which so affronted my father that he would not allow his son to accept the appointment. In the course of the fall of this year we moved from Newtown to Germantown, where we spent the winter. I remember on the fourth of March to have heard the cannon from Dorchester Heights and subsequently to have gone to some elevated situation from where we could see the British ships leave the harbor. I went to Boston with my husband to witness the entry of Washington into the city. He walked with old John Adams. The citizens formed a procession. They were all on foot. There was a distant connection by marriage between our family and the Adams'. We lived in the same town, went to the same meeting and used to dine at the old president's house on Sundays. I remember John Quincy Adams very well, he was a boy about home in those days. There were a number of other children, all of whom have turned out ill except John." E.H.P.]

We turn from this glimpse of great men of the period, and from drum and trumpet history to the child-life of the day as lived by little Mary Palmer and her brothers and sisters. Her mother's scant chronicle records the coming of many boys and girls, after Joseph in 1773 and Mary in 1775:

["I visited Watertown frequently, and there on the twenty-fifth of February, 1778, my third child was born, who was called Elizabeth. On the twenty-second of February, 1780, John Hampden, my fourth child, was born at Watertown. September third, 1782, Edward, my fifth child, was born at Boston. . . . August 3, 1784, my sixth child was born, Amelia. . . . On September 2, 1786, Sophia was born. . . . My son, George, was born in Boston, Sept. 4, 1788." E.H.P.]

The ninth child, Catherine Hunt, was born at Framingham a year after the last entry in her mother's memoir, March 1, 1791.¹ Catherine married Henry Putnam of Boston, a Harvard graduate and a lawyer.

These birth-dates carry us far beyond Revolutionary days when the two or three elder children played together at Germantown:

"At that time the British fleet were hovering around and it was doubtful where they would land. Gen. Gage had command on shore. So it was decided our family should occupy what was called the farmhouse near the river at Germantown, and there we lived all my infant days. There I remember my first childish sports. The Germans my grandfather brought to America with him and who, in the days of prosperity and peace, carried on the glass works, had built themselves a large stone house, floors, stairs, partitions

¹ For brief summary of the nine Palmer children, see Appendix A.

and so forth, all stone. They had long abandoned it and, when I first remember playing about it, it was a favorite resort for us children, my eldest brother, Joseph, Betsey and myself. There was a tradition that the first owners had quarreled and fought and that some one was killed among them, and that consequently the premises were haunted; and nothing would have persuaded any of our domestics to venture within it under dark, but we were delighted to explore all parts by daylight. The stone staircase was a curiosity and I remember running up and down, and cautioning Betsey not to venture; there was a bannister of stone, supported by stone posts, and my brother, with perhaps his incipient sailor propensities, would climb to the top and slide down, making me long to do so too, but he would protest—we were girls and should not climb in such dangerous places. There were no windows in it then, but large holes for them. Afterwards my grandfather had it taken down, I presume, for I do not remember seeing it when I was more advanced in life. Perhaps it was the awful catastrophe that befell the 'great house,' as the first structure was called among the people, that induced the Germans to build such a comfortable dwelling. It felt cold like the cellar in the warmest days; whether it was warm in winter, I was never informed.

"Another pastime we were very fond of was wading at low tide out upon the little sand hills which were left

bare, to pick up shells. We were for years in the habit of doing this, and procuring beautiful shells which we would send to our cousins in the interior. Once, I remember, we were tempted to go farther than usual, the water was low, and we, Joe, Betsey and I, saw, at a distance, a beautiful little island covered with seaweed and shells, and, children-like, pressed forward to get them, never reflecting (if we knew) that the sea would soon return and intercept our passage. We found the shells abundant and beautiful and busied ourselves picking them up and filling our aprons with them regardless of all else. At length, to our dismay, we found our island grew smaller and smaller, and looking around could not discern the way we came; the water was over our knees on every side; the wind began to blow, dark clouds were in the west and it began to thunder and lighten. Such screaming as we set up was a caution. Fortunately, my father was at home and from the parlor window could see our danger. Immediately he threw off boots and stockings and, regardless of wetting himself, waded out to our rescue and taking a girl under each arm, bade Joe follow him and brought us safe to land. We were more careful in future, but often at this day, when I think how those waves rolled and how fast our ground vanished beneath our feet, my heart beats up. Little children who read this, learn wisdom from grandma's folly!

“It was often a great treat to us children to be per-

mitted to go to meeting because, being three miles from the meeting house, the horse and chaise was tackled every Sabbath when the weather permitted, and two of the ladies and one child could go in it. Of course, we took turns usually, sometimes we went as a reward for having been very good the week before, or for having done something extraordinary. Once I recollect, I was the fortunate individual, rather out of my turn. I was then, as I often did, staying at my grandfather's, and my Aunt Betsey told me early in the morning, if I would take the Bible and commit the ten commandments to memory before it was time to go to meeting, I should go with her and Aunt Polly in the chaise. They should stay all day and pass the noon at Col. Quincy's where I always liked to go, and the only place where Aunt Polly was in the habit of going. As ever after the unfortunate fright, she seldom visited anywhere, Col. Quincy's excepted, who was peculiarly attentive to her, and she wanted to prove she bore no malice to him. He lived in a splendid mansion built in English cottage style, and the grounds around it were beautifully laid out and ornamented with the choicest of fruits and flowers—great temptations to children. So I sat down resolved to win my reward. I could not have been then more than seven years old, for it was during the war, and it will be remembered I was only six weeks old at the commencement of the struggle. I succeeded in my task and have never forgotten the pleasure I felt

when I heard my aunt tell what I had done. The fact is, I could always commit to memory with ease, and do not remember learning to read, thanks to the same Aunt Betsey (Elizabeth Palmer) who was to my mother what my Amelia has been to me, in teaching all the children. We all loved her dearly, in which feeling I was more abundant, till on one occasion she punished me unjustly, which I could never forget and scarcely forgive.

“I will tell the anecdote and hope that it will be a warning to all who may read it hereafter to be very careful how they charge a sensitive child with telling an untruth. It so happened that at this time I was living at home near the seaside, although I always preferred living at my grandfather’s, but now I had been at home some time. My parents, especially my mother, had just been reading Locke’s celebrated work upon education, wherein he advocates the odious theory of letting children go barefoot, and, having become warm advocates of this cold doctrine, began that winter by letting us all run out upon the first snow and ice without shoes or stockings, intending to make us hardy and proof against the cold. One day, tired of staying at home, I begged permission to take the baby and the rest of the little ones up to grandpa’s. Mother was glad enough to get rid of us, no doubt, for a season, and consented. Joe and I undertook to carry baby, who was named John Hampden, after the Englishman of

that name so famous in Cromwell's time and whose memory my grandfather almost worshipped. Betsey came also, all of us barefoot in a cold November day, the ground covered in spots with ice and snow. We ran as fast as we could with our little burden, then seven or eight months old; the distance was not great, the sun shone bright—and, as we had not worn any shoes all the summer before except to meeting or visiting, our feet, I suppose, were much in the state of those of the little paddies who run about our streets. I have no idea that we thought about the cold. When we got to the house, we found that Sally Cook, the little girl my grandmother had taken to bring up and whom we wanted to play with and help us take care of the baby, was helping fold clothes at a long folding board laid out in the dining room, at which stood Aunt Betsey and Miss Becca Lappington, one of grandpa's protégées, folding clothes. Rather disappointed, we all rushed into a large light closet where we were accustomed to play whenever we came there; Hampden was rather frightened and uproarious, and we were all no doubt noisy enough. Presently an authoritative stamp from Aunt Betsey shut all mouths, especially mine, for I was accustomed to obey her at once. She then looked hard at me and asked me if my feet were not cold. 'No, ma'am,' said I, and returned to my play. Soon after, the clothes were finished, the board removed and Aunt Betsey took me by the hand and led me into her

boudoir. My heart trembled and I tried to think what I had done, for her angry countenance assured me that something was the matter; besides, she told Sally she might take the children home when they wanted to go, as she should keep me for the present. This was so common an affair for her to keep me all night that I should not have been alarmed but for her lowering looks. She led me into her room, shut the door and then, sitting down, drew me up before her and asked me how I dared not to answer her when she spoke to me. 'I did answer you, marm.' 'Yes, you did after I had spoken two or three times.' 'I did not hear you before.' 'Don't tell me a lie, you must have heard me, you naughty girl.' And then she shook me very hard, at which I cried. Then she shook me again, more violently, bidding me hush up. In vain I plead what was the righteous truth, 'Indeed, indeed, I did not hear you speak to me till you stamped your foot, the children made such a noise.' 'Don't repeat that dreadful lie, you wicked girl, you know you did hear me,' and again she shook me in such a manner as ever since makes me tremble when I see the like punishment inflicted on a poor little culprit; and, if I ever did so to any child of mine, I here beg them to forgive me, and never to practice it upon their children, the sensation is awful and it must be dangerous. I, of course, persisted in the only thing I had to say, and she, in her barbarous correction, every moment calling me a wicked lying girl, till ex-

hausted herself, and the evening coming on, she rose, set me down hard in her chair, and told me I should stay there till I could tell the truth and ask her pardon. My temper was aroused to the utmost and I screamed at height of my voice when she went out and shut the door. Partly anger, and partly fear of being left alone in the dark gave me energy and strength. I sprang after her and thumped with all my energies upon the door; this made her or someone sent by her, open the door so that I perceived I could get out. You may be sure that I improved the opportunity, and a very few moments found me at home telling my grievance to my mother, who, like me, could never endure that anyone should correct her children but herself; her indignation that her gentle little Polly should be so treated was not to be borne. I was too young to know what happened among the higher powers in the two families, but it broke up my visits there for a long time, and entirely weaned my young heart from Aunt Betsey, and all because it was unjust. I have no doubt that, had I really been to blame, conscience would have excused even a more severe punishment; but being told that I was a wicked lying girl when I told the truth, roused up such constant feeling of injury, that I never could love that aunt again.

“After many years had passed, I received a note from her by the hand of my two oldest boys on the occasion of their calling upon her after her return from West

Point, where she lived many years with her husband, Joseph Cranch. That note spoke the old kind heart, and soothed my ire entirely. Joseph Cranch and an elder brother of his, Nathaniel Cranch, Esq., were sons of another brother of my Grandma Palmer's who came over from England, after the Revolution. Nathaniel Cranch had a liberal education and was a lawyer who gave promise of being a rising character in his adopted country. He early conceived a warm attachment for his cousin Betsey, who was then in the prime of her beauty and a fine intellectual woman. They became engaged and continued so several years. Why the union was deferred I do not know, but have often heard my mother, who was frankness itself, say, 'Betsey tormented him by her coquettish ways.' They had frequent lover's quarrels and made up, good friends, apparently, as ever. At length, while my father was residing in Boston, soon after the peace, she was visiting us and he often visited her there. One day something occurred to disturb the current of true love, and he left the house highly excited. After he was gone, Betsey owned to my mother that she had provoked him too much. 'You will be sorry some day for this,' said my mother, 'such an excellent fellow as he is deserves better usage, he won't bear it much longer, you'll see.' 'Well, he shall wait till I am ready,' said Betsey with a laugh, her eyes meantime filled with tears as she left the room. Next morning poor Nat's mangled body

was discovered by some early workmen among the stones outside the old fortifications on Boston Neck, as it was then called. Poor Betsey was almost distracted, accusing herself of his death. His remains were carried to Quincy to his Uncle Cranch's. She wore the deepest mourning for him for a long time. There were various conjectures as to the cause and manner of his death but all ended in the conviction that he must have, by some means, ascended the fortifications immediately after leaving our house, as he had on the same dress and there had been no robbery, all the valuables he had usually about him were safe. But whether he fell accidentally from the height to which he had ascended, or purposely threw himself off, will never be known.

“His brother Joseph was a very different character, sober, honest and industrious. Educated as most English mechanics are, or were in that day, he had learnt the gunsmith's trade in England and was a first-rate workman. It was a business that could not fail to be profitable in this country where all was new comparatively. He prospered accordingly, and, after a suitable time, he discovered to his cousin Betsey, that for many years his heart had been hers, even before his brother had won her. He had pined in secret, but ‘never told his love,’ but now ventured to disclose his unalterable attachment. Then and for some time she was inexorable, protesting she should never love another, but more of this in the future.

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Shop-bill of Joseph Palmer, Boston (before 1777)

“I have reason to think that the seven or eight years spent about this time in Germantown, notwithstanding the political troubles, was the happiest portion of my mother’s life. Quite retired from the noise and strife of war, she devoted her time to the education of her little ones. I remember with great delight her calling us to our daily lessons, reading and writing, (for we were mere babies when we began) in her chamber overlooking the sea, the white muslin bed and window curtains, the white pine floor scoured as white as Phoebe Spears could make it. Carpets were rare things in those days; we had one on the parlor directly under this chamber and one, a homemade one, on the dining room situated in a wing of the house. The kitchen was back of the parlor, a large old fashioned stack of chimneys serving both rooms and the chamber above each having a small fireplace—the luxury of stoves not being discovered then! Here in this pleasant neat chamber we, Joe, Betsey and myself, received our first lessons. I well remember learning ‘Let dogs delight’ and ‘Though I am young, a little one.’ Betsey and I learnt with comparative ease. Joseph liked figures better than poetry and excelled us on the slate.

“One day we had a recess from our books, sewing and so forth, and were all looking out of the window admiring a porpoise tumbling about in the water, coming almost up to the shore under our windows, when suddenly out attention was attracted and all our fears aroused by

the appearance of a splendid barge crowded with gaily decked officers with their cocked hats and shining epaulettes, just coming around a point of land which we all knew was on the way to Boston, where we had long been told the Regulars (a name given by the vulgar to the British troops) were, and with which our Aunt Sally [Sarah Hunt], then domesticated with us, used to frighten us children after we were in bed, if we were noisy. We now thought they were surely come and began an outcry, some running up garret and some clinging to mother in great terror. But soon she quieted our fears by the assurance that they were not the dreaded Regulars, but our dear friends, the French officers, who had come all the way from France in great ships to help us fight the British. We then ran to the windows and saw our father on the wharf, shaking hands with them and inviting them into the house. As soon as they were seated, he ran upstairs bidding mother dress herself quick and come down; this she was then doing and descended to receive the strangers. I thought she looked beautiful in her white dress and beautiful hair and complexion, and so did the officers, no doubt, as from that time till peace was declared, they often came and, instead of running away as at first, we children delighted to see them come. Once we had an officer boarding with us many weeks; he had been wounded and was still quite an invalid. I do not remember his name if I ever knew it, but I remember that, as soon as

he discovered that my father and mother instructed us, he volunteered to teach us writing. He wrote beautifully as far as wonderful flourishes went, and Joseph profited by his instructions, but we girls were too young or too stupid to do so. He used to play the flute and sing with my father, who was himself proficient in music and enjoyed the society of his accomplished guest whenever he had leisure.

“But, at this time, having retired in disgust from the service where they felt keenly that their exertions or sacrifices were not appreciated, my grandfather and his son set up a salt works on their farm. They built a long range of buildings and had shallow pans set in brick, where they boiled down sea water and made excellent table salt; which proved very profitable at a time when all commerce was interrupted. My grandfather had been somewhat acquainted with the process in Liverpool, and my father, having a remarkable chemical genius, was able to assist him greatly in making various kinds of salts. I recollect how he used to have ever so many pewter plates and dishes around the fireplaces. I asked what it was for, why he brought all that salt into the house. ‘I am making medicine for you, my dear, this is Epsom salts and this is Glauber salts and so forth.’ All of which I knew only from occasionally being compelled to take them when sick, a sore affliction which, thanks to the immortal Hahnemann, our little ones may escape, if they are wise.

However, at this time of trouble, my father made it profitable during the war, and their salt supplied the neighborhood with that necessary article. They had dams, canals and sluices by which the sea water was drawn into their pans, and I remember seeing the process—how the sea water was drawn into the first, where it was boiled and scum till no more scum arose. Then this brine was drawn by faucets fitted for the purpose into the next pan, where it boiled down more, and then drawn into another and so on. I was too young to know why all this was done, but I knew that at last fine white salt was produced and shovelled out into bins prepared to receive it, having fine holes at the bottom for the purpose, I suppose, of drainage. This business, of course, took a great portion of my father's time.

“His guests were fond of walking over the grounds and works while they were in process, and there was seldom a time when our house was free from guests. My grandfather was the very soul of hospitality and had imbued his whole family with his spirit.¹ At the

¹ Here may be told in the words of the writer in *The New Englander* the amazing story of the Copley portrait of Gen. Palmer, painted four years before the Revolution: “The portrait arrived at the family mansion while he was yet absent, and was placed on the floor in the hall, and the workmen engaged in the several manufactories, to whom he was a father and friend rather than a master, were summoned by his family to contemplate the excellent likeness. While his family were contemplating the honest delight of the men, a favorite cat, which Gen. Palmer was in the habit of letting sit on his shoulder in domestic hours, came into the room. She walked directly to the picture and attempted to climb upon the shoulder. Being reflected by the glass,

time of which I am now writing, there were residing beneath his roof three women, reduced ladies, women of refinement and education who by the troublesome times had been deprived of their natural protectors and property. The eldest of these was Miss Eunice Payne, sister of the famous (I should say, infamous) Treat Payne, Esq. He was a lawyer in Boston and inherited a handsome estate from his father, and report said his sister ought to have had share. She was a miserable invalid, all cramped by rheumatism, so that she could not straighten any finger except the forefinger and thumb of her right hand. When I first remember her, she occupied my Grandmother Palmer's best room below stairs, because she could not walk up and downstairs, and, being a tall fine looking woman and sorely afflicted, it was impossible, without giving her great pain, to assist her in that operation. Therefore their best room was given up to her, so that she might walk about and associate with the family when she pleased, or be quiet and retired if she wished. We reached the house by ascending a large flight of stone steps, entered a hall in which, on the left hand, hung a splendid pair of buck's horns, on the crags of which my

(it was a crayon painting,) she went behind the frame, in order, as it would seem, to get up on his back, as she often did on that of the original. This trifling circumstance touched every heart, and in a moment, wife, children, friends and servants, were bathed in tears, a tribute alike to the excellence of the artist, and the loveliness of the man he had caused to live by his pencil."

grandfather and his guests hung their hats, and across which lay grandpa's gold headed cane whenever he was not walking with it; then came the door of the family sitting room. Continuing on through the hall at the left hand, we passed into the other rooms of the house; on the right hand was the staircase, at the foot of which was the door of the room occupied by Miss Payne. It was papered with a crimson velvet paper flowered with black with a rich gilt border. I used to think it magnificent, when, by great favor, I was permitted to go in and see Miss Payne. When not in pain, she liked to have us go in and see her, often treating us with an orange or a remarkably fine apple, which had been sent her by some of our Braintree friends, with whom she was quite a favorite, especially Col. Quincy, whose beautiful place abounded with all the choicest fruits of our country, as also did our own Germantown, whose peaches, apples and rich purple mulberries my childish reminiscence pronounces the best that ever grew. Here Miss Payne lived and was petted and waited upon like a queen as long as my grandfather called his house his own.

“The two Miss Lappingtons I cannot tell much about, except that they were always there ever after I was old enough to remember anybody and always appeared like daughters of the family, assisting in all things as my aunt did, even to hearing us read, directing our writing, sewing and so forth when we were stay-

ing there any time. I understood they were children of an old friend of my grandfather's who had left them orphans, and the youngest, Miss Rebecca, made her home there. Miss Betsey was not there much and, I suspect, only considered it a home whenever other employment at her needle failed. She often went to Boston, I know, and would occasionally spend some weeks at a time at Germantown, where she always found cheerful welcome.

"Our friends at Braintree found Germantown a pleasant ride when they wanted recreation and, as we had horses and carriages, the visits we received were reciprocated with mutual pleasure, and sometimes I have recollections of going to Boston with my father to visit my uncle who lived there. My Uncle, Samuel Hunt, third son of the family at Watertown, was many years master of the Grammar School, as it was called, in School Street.¹ I believe he began early in the Revolution to teach that school and I have to ask his pardon for having left him out when writing up his brothers and sisters, especially can I do so because he was my favorite uncle. He married for his first wife

¹ Samuel Hunt was the eldest, not the third son of John Hunt of Watertown (see E. H. P.'s account of her father's family, and Appendix). For nearly thirty years, (1776-1805) he was master of the Boston Public Latin School on School St. "In 1790 it was voted to pull down the dwelling house now occupied by Mr. Hunt and erect on the same spot a school house of two stories, sufficient to accommodate the children of the centre of the town." (Thwing, *The Crooked and Narrow Streets of Boston*, 1920, pp. 105-106.)

Miss Mary Dixwell, granddaughter of the celebrated Mother Byles of precious memory. I just remember seeing her once after she was confined to her room. She was an invalid for some time before her death. They had two sons, Samuel and John Dixwell. Samuel studied medicine, and, after he had been in business some little time, finding another Dr. Sam Hunt who interfered in some way with his letters or business, he petitioned the legislature to alter his name from Hunt to Dixwell, and I am told he is known as Dr. Dixwell now in Boston, but I have never seen him since I used to come and visit them from Germantown, to my recollection. Perhaps he is not living; if he is, he is nearly as old as I am. John died young."

Much later in her Memoirs, Mary Tyler tells the story of the famous "dark day," May 19, 1780, at the Boston home, to which the family had moved from Germantown shortly before:

"Amelia [Amelia Sophia Tyler] says that this will be a good place to tell some other personal anecdotes, which I omitted in the right order of events. One respecting my reminiscence of the famous dark day which happened May nineteenth, 1780, when I was about five years and two months old. I recollect but little about it, of course. My parents lived then in a house near Dr. Lowell's meeting house, then under the charge of Dr. Mayhew; our garden ran nearly to the meeting house and, after going around the fence, we went by the

meeting house to a back lane, where lived an aged matron, who taught a school of little folks of my age. I did not usually go to school there or anywhere, being too young, but that day mother expected company to dinner and wanted Bessy, who was two years old, and myself, who no doubt was quite as troublesome, out of the way while preparing her dinner; consequently, she dressed us both in our best, ready to see the company, and sent us to school. I remember our pink frocks and red morocco shoes and white stockings, and the great charge I had to be careful not to soil them, because of the company; so we went, I leading the little one, then two years old. I had never been to school before, and was in great terror of the mistress, although she received us very kindly and consented that Bessy should sit by me, although she had a little bench on purpose for little ones. Yet, as I had often been threatened with being sent to school, when I was naughty, it was an awful place to me, and I scarcely dared breathe for fear of being punished. About the middle of the forenoon it began to grow so dark we could not very well see to read, and we children began to think of rain, and how we should get home, especially I thought of my new shoes. It grew darker and darker, so that at last the mistress said we might go home as we could not see to read. There was a great hurrying, you may be sure, for although the old lady tried not to frighten us, it was very evident she was frightened herself; the old-

est children caught their bonnets and hats and ran, I could not run much owing to little Bessy, but we went as fast as we could. There was a gutter to carry off waste water ran the length of our back yard and into the street just before we came to the gate. It was so dark I could not see it, but I knew it was there, and we must get over it. Bessy was too small to step over, so I went behind her and putting my arms under hers, attempted to lift her over, but mistaking a bright spot of water for bare ground, I plunged in and bespattered my nice frock and stockings all over. Bessy cried and brought help from the house, but the fear of mother's scolding about my spoiled shoes and clothes overpowered my fears of the darkness, but that saved me from punishment.

"Mother was busy assisting in dishing up her dinner. Who the guests were I have forgotten, if I ever knew, except Miss Betsey Mayhew, daughter of the Rev. Dr. Mayhew, the pastor of the church which then stood where Dr. Lowell's now stands.¹ This lady was a regular blue-stocking of the old English stamp, and very peculiar. She lived single till rather advanced in life, from coyness which kept all the gentlemen at more than a respectful distance. Eventually, she married a

¹ The West Church over which Jonathan Mayhew, its first minister, presided, 1747-1767, was replaced in 1806 by the present brick church, in the charge of Dr. Lowell from 1806 to 1861. This building, on Lynde St., near Cambridge St. not far from Bowdoin Sq., became in 1885 the home of a branch of the Public Library.

Mr. (Peter) Wainwright, a merchant in Boston, my mother said, upon the condition that they should sail immediately for Europe after the ceremony was over. Accordingly when all was ready and a ship prepared to sail, they were married by her father¹ at his house. Soon after, the bride was missing and nowhere to be found. At length the anxious bridegroom bethought him of the ship, and hastening to the wharf, there he found his wife snugly ensconced in her cabin; she had taken that singular method to avoid all bridal congratulations. He dispatched tidings to her father, and immediately the ship sailed. They tarried away until her youthful blushes were outgrown, and afterwards returned to Boston, and, I believe, lived with her father, who had been a widower many years and had no other children. He died soon after. I will not vouch for this story, but I think it correct as I had it from my mother, who was very intimate with the lady and often laughed at her escapade.

“But we must return to our story. Many people in our neighborhood were much frightened, thinking the consummation of all things was at hand, but my father said, at the time, that the smell of smoke and the burnt leaves flying in the air plainly told the cause, in addition to a dense fog, which hung about the coast for

¹ If Jonathan Mayhew's daughter was “married by her father,” who died in 1767 when she was very young, she certainly was not “Miss Betsey” in 1780. Indeed, all Mary's recollections of the Mayhews are self-contradictory.

several days before and continued. This, however, scarcely accounted for the darkness pervading the whole country, as it did for many miles in the interior. My brother Edward was born in that house. When I visited John [her second son] when he lived in Bowdoin St., I tried to identify the site of it, but, although I knew by the situation of Beacon Hill that it must be somewhere in that location, as we used to go over the Hill to the Common, I was then too young to remember any other landmarks. All is so entirely altered. Gov. Hancock's house was the only one on that fine street at the head of the Common, and all the land behind Dr. Mayhew's meeting house was a great marsh, where the water stood in little ponds and cows found fine pasture. That was seventy eight or nine years ago!"

Mrs. Palmer and her daughter tell in different language the same story of the announcement of peace at the close of the Revolution:

[“In January 1783, my children were playing on the floor and I was busy at work, when in came my husband in a great gale; he danced about the room, taking hornpipe steps for which he was famous, and clapped his hands, and seized Mary in his arms, and jumped her about with every demonstration of joy. In answer to my inquiries he informed me, ‘Peace is declared.’” E.H.P.]

“About this time, I recollect, we children were playing on the floor in the parlor. I was lying down on the

carpet when my father rushed into the house, threw open the door of the room saying, 'Hurrah, Hurrah!' and, catching me up in his arms, danced a hornpipe round the room singing and whistling in a very extraordinary manner. Mother sat at her work-table as usual. She sprang up exclaiming, 'Mr. Palmer, what is the matter? What does ail you?' He dropped me instantly, clasped her in his arms, flew around the room kissing her over and over again and at last exclaimed 'Peace is declared! Hurrah!' and away he flew to spread the joyful news. Mother, as was her wont, expressed her joy by a copious shower of tears. We poor children were too much astonished by the behavior of our revered parents to say anything, but ran out of the house to hear more about the great event."

CHAPTER III

AFTER THE REVOLUTION (1783-1789)

Prosperity in Germantown—girls and gallants—children's play. Royall Tyler enters the story—his first meeting with his "little wife"—his engagement to Abby Adams—jealous gossips—parting of lovers—fair jilt and unhappy swain. Poverty in Boston—father's business ventures. Last days of Gen. Palmer—quarrel with John Hancock and loss of money—loss of Germantown estate and removal to Dorchester—salt-works on Boston Neck—death of Gen. Palmer and ruin of his family. Father's failure and his Boston boarding houses—house on School St.—the blind electrician—debts and duns, with Tyler to the rescue—house near Fort Hill—Southern and English boarders—Tyler and Shays' Rebellion—Tyler and the New York stage—young Joseph at sea—old friends.

For a year or more after the Revolution, the world went well with the growing family of the Palmers. And the eldest daughter of the house, our biographer, tells of life at her grandfather's home, a story bright with all the colors of youth:

"I was born in 1775, this (the peace) was in 1783, consequently I was about eight. This joyful event made very little alteration in our living, except that the general prosperity consequent naturally produced sociability among friends. Germantown was so delightful a residence; the rides so pleasant, the fishing, hunting or rather shooting pigeons, partridges, wild

duck and so forth, so interesting to the gentlemen, and the sailing parties so popular with the ladies, that we were seldom without guests. My father's chums, Israel Keith and Foster Candy, were often there several days at a time, and my mother had a friend, Miss Maria Fenno, who was at one time the magnet of attraction to the gentlemen, especially Mr. Keith, who thought he could not live out of her orbit; also a Miss Sally Curtis, who had a devoted admirer they used to call Billy Peck, whose diminutive stature and frisky manners answered well to his cognomen, although, I believe, he was esteemed a man of talents and great acquirements. Miss Curtis was one of those sweet sentimental young ladies who expect to be admired by all the gentlemen, and generally are, and, without being coquettes, contrive to keep all in uncertainty by their soft gentle manners to every one, and who delight in Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* and *Sir Charles Grandison*. Her person was tall and commanding, her eyes blue and languishing, her complexion fair though somewhat freckled, with a profusion of fine hair which she wore dressed with powder as the fashion then was. I may as well say here that, after twenty years of courtship off and on, Billy Peck, having become a learned professor in Harvard College,¹ married Miss Curtis, who must at

¹ William Dandridge Peck, A.M. Harvard, 1782, became Professor of Natural History and Fellow of the American Academy. He died in 1822.

that time have attained the respectable age of forty at least. All this time they had professed the most refined platonic friendship. I was then married myself and resident in Vermont, since which I have never seen her or him. She had an older sister, Martha, who married Dr. Freeman, so long settled over the Stone Chapel Congregation.¹ She had been married previously to a Mr. Clark and had one son Samuel, who used to accompany his mother in her visits to Germantown after her widowhood, I presume, as she always came dressed in black and I never saw her husband. Sam was a great torment to me I remember, constantly teasing and plaguing me as children say. One feat of his which remains vivid in my memory was chasing me round and round with a pair of sharp scissors, which he held in both hands, opening and shutting them threatening to cut my nose off. I was just baby enough to believe he would, and it was very annoying. His mother sat in the room and I didn't dare complain; she would look up occasionally from her work and say, 'Sammy, Sammy, you must be still and not trouble the little girls,' but Sammy did not choose to mind, till my mother, perceiving our trouble, for Betsey suffered equally, called him to her and took the scissors away from him. In

¹ The marriage of Dr. Freeman and Mrs. Martha Clark occurred several years later. The celebrated divine was consecrated pastor of Stone Chapel (King's Chapel) on Nov. 18, 1787. George Palmer, the youngest son of the family, was the first child baptized by him (early in 1788).

after years we became better friends and playmates. But I have wandered, and left Miss Fenno and Mr. Keith. He was at this time a devoted lover. They spent many weeks at various times at our home, but in vain as far as their courtship was concerned. I was too young then to know why, but they each married after many years, but not each other."

Now the conquering hero treads the stage. In the description of the child Mary's first meeting with the only man in the world who was ever anything to her, Madam Tyler is young again and beholds a marvel:

"About this time I first saw your father [Royall Tyler].¹ I was then about ten,² perhaps. This was Monday—the day before, Sunday, I had been brought to meeting and left at Uncle Cranch's,—my father was going that day to Boston. I had the promise of going with him. I was dressed in a pink calico frock, white

¹ Madam Tyler's glowing account of her first meeting with her future husband (in 1783 or 1784, when she was eight or nine) runs directly counter to the pretty story preserved in Burnham's "Sketch of Brattleboro" (*Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, v. 86): "Tyler, when a gay gallant of twenty, in scarlet coat and short clothes entered the house of his friend, Mrs. Joseph Pearse Palmer of Boston, and took from her arms her infant child (Mary Palmer) and said: 'This child will become my wife'. This much at least is true that Royall Tyler (b. 1757, Harvard, 1776) member of a good Boston family, officer in the Revolution, now a practising attorney, was nearly twenty years older than Mary and that he sometimes called the child, "my little wife."

² Mary was not more than eight or nine when she first saw Royall Tyler, as this meeting was sometime before June, 1784, when Abby Adams sailed for Europe.

stockings and red morocco shoes and my hair curled in my neck, my bonnet and outside garment, a cape trimmed with blue, lay on the table and I was standing at the parlor window watching every carriage, hoping it would be my father coming for me. At that day it was the fashion for gentlemen to wear scarlet broadcloth coats, white vests, ruffled shirts, breeches just below the knee. At length a chaise with one gentleman in it drove into the yard, I could see the red coat and white vest, and my heart beating with joy. Not doubting it was my father, I ran to the door, wild with delight, but alas! quickly perceiving it was not he, I ran back disappointed. The gentleman followed immediately, and, in his cheerful musical voice, began to ask me whom I expected, which seemed to fill me so full of joy and now with disappointment; at the same time seating himself and taking my hand drew me to him, setting me on his knee, repeating his enquiries. I was astonished; his appearance, his manners, his looks overpowered me; I had never seen anything so beautiful I thought, but you, who never saw him in his beauty, can have no idea of it. He had to ask me many questions before I could get courage to answer him, but, after I found my voice, I told him all he asked, and soon my father arrived. Uncle Cranch came in and introduced the stranger as Mr. Tyler, a young lawyer, who was intending to locate in their village.

“My father was as much fascinated as I was. The



Mary Palmer Tyler
Wife of Royall Tyler



Royall Tyler
1757-1826

dress of young gentlemen at that time was very becoming; they wore their hair curling naturally about the neck and to your father it was peculiarly becoming. My father invited him heartily to come to Germantown and visit his family, assuring him of a hearty welcome. This he accepted with apparent pleasure and all the way to Boston we talked about our new friend. Little did either of us then think what an important acquaintance was then begun. He proved a very dear friend ever after. And if ever a life-long love was commenced at first sight, it was then done on my part. I certainly loved him then and always afterwards, although it was a purely spiritual love for many years. After this his visits were frequent to us."

Royall Tyler does not long sustain the rôle of conqueror. He wins, it is true, the love of Abby Adams, daughter of John and Abigail, but, unhappily, he cannot keep what he has won. Our two ladies tell of this losing suit; the mother reciting the bare facts of the lover's dismissal, the daughter elaborating these by the addition of much circumstantial detail and of sorrowful comment, for, though he is thus saved for her, Mary's warm heart cannot brook the jilting of her hero:

[“While we lived at Germantown, Royall Tyler, a young lawyer, established himself at Quincy. He became acquainted with Miss Abby Adams, a daughter of the first [Adams] president. He courted her for several years. Her father was in England on an embassy.

Mrs. Adams approved of the connection and gave her consent. The father gave his consent too, but wished to have his daughter visit Europe before her marriage. She went. I was in Boston when she started on her voyage. She wept very much; thought she ought not to go, although her father did wish it; and she had a presentiment she should not see Mr. Tyler again. She had been gone about a year, when Mr. Tyler expected letters requesting him to come over and celebrate their nuptials. The ship arrived and brought him all his letters to her, and a note from her to this effect:

‘Sir:

Herewith you receive your letters and miniature with my desire that you would return mine to my Uncle Cranch, and my hopes that you are well satisfied with the affair as is

A. A.’

After receiving this dismissal, Mr. Tyler left the practice of law and retired to Jamaica Plains to his mother's house where he lived four years without doing any kind of business.” E.H.P.]

“He soon became engaged to Miss Adams and they frequently rode on horseback to Germantown. My mother had been acquainted with her almost from her cradle and constantly visited at her father's, the connection by marriage with Uncle Cranch's family ren-

dering the families more intimate than they otherwise would probably have been. Mrs. Adams was a very fine woman, as her letters now extant prove, and her daughter, then only sixteen, was worthy of such a mother, and she was a most beautiful girl; full well do I remember how he used to sit and look at her. I remember her riding habit of nankeen turned up and faced with blue satin, and her little blue hat and feather, and how delighted we children used to be when they came. But the envy and ill-will, often excited by the sight of such happiness, soon began to mar their felicity. Mr. Tyler boarded with Uncle Cranch; he had two daughters rather older than Abby Adams, and they, especially Betsey the eldest, could ill brook such exclusive attentions to her cousin whom she looked upon as a little girl yet. Soon came reports that the young lawyer spent too much time visiting and riding about. Some wondered how Mr. and Mrs. Adams could let their only daughter be engaged to such a gay young man, who did not attend to his business, as he should do if he ever expected to make any figure in the world. These and other reports prejudicial to the hopes of the youthful pair soon reached the ears of the father who was absent in Europe helping settle the public affairs. He wrote to Mamma, that 'honest poverty was no objection to a young man, provided he was steady and industrious, but dissipation and idleness were insuperable objections.' Mamma's answers

were such as to quiet his fears, and he gave consent to the acquaintance, relying upon the mother's superior knowledge and judgment, but advising to wait until both were older before any actual engagement took place—this threw a damper upon the young people. But Mr. Tyler's wrath was roused against those with whom he boarded. Mrs. Adams could not believe his suspicions but finally finding that those unfriendly reports continued to annoy him, and thinking them very unjust and cruel, he persuaded mother and daughter to consent to his withdrawing all particular attentions from them and devoting them entirely to 'the house at home.' This, he said, would test their feelings and he had no doubt would prove to everyone that it was envy only at the bottom of all the censure lavished upon him. It was a cruel experiment, but perhaps it was deserved. Accordingly he by degrees appeared to drop his devotion to Miss Adams, and became very quiet at home; spent all his evenings either reading to the ladies there (they were more intellectual than the other family) or else walking or riding with Miss Betsey Cranch. My mother was in the secret and they often came to our house. Soon the tone was changed. Nobody was equal to Mr. Tyler. Aunt Cranch was a great gossip, and was eloquent in defending his character, whenever she heard a lip against him: 'Wondered how people could be so ill-natured as to try to injure a young man of such fine talents; for her part she believed he would be

one of the first characters in the country, what if he was gay and lively, it all arose from his fine imagination. It was as natural for him to write poetry as it was to breathe' and so forth. Thus matters went on till it was evident to all concerned that he had only to ask to be accepted. Fatal experiment! It was wrong, and, of course, productive of nothing but evil. Upon the discovery, of course, their wrath was unbounded, and was never appeased until they broke up the match.

"Mr. Adams was appointed Ambassador to the British court, but, previously to settling there, he wished his wife and daughter to join him at Paris, where he should spend some weeks. Previously to this, however, he had received such favorable accounts of Mr. Tyler, that he had given his consent to the engagement, and my father had removed his family to Boston and gone into business there. I was left at Germantown with the family there. But now came peremptory orders that previously to her marriage Mrs. Adams and the young lady should visit Europe; they both petitioned not to be separated till the ceremony should be performed, but he was immovable and my mother said she did not doubt his mind had been again disturbed by unfavorable reports. At all events, they had to go and my mother, who was present at the final parting, has often told me what a distressing scene it was. Mrs. Adams appeared as much afflicted as her daughter. They arranged their correspondence and parted. He

went to the ship with them, and directly to my father's, where he had boarded some time, having removed to Boston, threw himself into a chair exclaiming, 'She is gone! I shall never see her more!'¹ My father and mother used all the arguments they could to comfort him, but what use are arguments!

"Time soothed his feelings, and some time afterwards, when a tremendous packet containing several sheets sealed with the U. S. seal was delivered to him, his spirits revived. So it went on for a year or two. But a fatality seemed to attend the affair from the first. At this time there arose a balloon furor in Boston and all through the country, and many persons undertook to make them for amusement; among others your father and my mother set about it. They made several unsuccessful attempts. At last one was made and sent up. Children were delighted, and nothing more was

¹ Later in Madam Tyler's reminiscences appears this note: "Mrs. Adams sailed for Europe while Mr. Adams was in Paris, before entering upon his ambassadorship, and while we occupied that house in Beacon Street. It was there your father commenced boarding with us and opened his law office in Boston, and there I saw him shed tears of agony the next summer, at parting from Miss Adams as he then said, forever! Although he then spoke, at random, it proved prophetic." Mrs. Adams' delightful letters show that she and her daughter Abby sailed for London, June 20, 1784. During her three years in England, she writes frequently to Betsey and Lucy Cranch and more than once mentions Charles Storer, the intermediary in Tyler's losing suit. The biographers, writing more objectively than Mary Palmer, remark that "the stay in London brought Mrs. Adams two great joys: the happy marriage of her daughter, Abigail, to Col. W. S. Smith, and the birth of her grandson."

thought of it till a letter arrived from England to Mr. Tyler written by a friend of his joking him about his new trade of balloon making, and hinting that unfavorable reports had been received, he heard, at headquarters relative to his attention to business. This of course gave him some uneasiness, but he had in the meantime mentioned his little frolic in his letters but soon after, he had intimations that a certain Mr. Smith, who was private secretary to Mr. Adams, was paying his devoirs to Miss Adams. This was a thunderbolt and soon followed by a formal dismissal, and the return of all his voluminous letters, demanding hers. These letters were brought by his friend, Charles Storer, who said he was present in the drawing-room when Miss Adams brought them in to deliver them to him. Her mother was also present, and said, 'Abby, have you well considered what you are about?' 'Madam,' says she, 'I have well considered and am determined.' She then left the room and he did not see her again, but said he understood from reports, she was, or soon expected to be, engaged to Mr. Smith. They were soon after married. Many years afterwards, after I came to Vermont, my mother met her at a party at Watertown, at Aunt Jenny Hunt's. As soon as they recognized each other, she came and sat down by mother, took her hand, squeezed it and burst into tears, and soon left the room; she did not see her again. Did she think of the last time they saw each other? She was then quite an invalid

and died soon after. It was said that the Smiths were not a happy couple, but they left a family of children in New York."

In 1784, the year after the peace, the panorama shifts from Germantown to Boston, from the high ground of happiness and prosperity, to the tremulous quicksands of failure and poverty. The change in fortune was swift in coming:

"We will now return to Germantown. Great and distressing events had transpired there since we saw both families so happy there, and making others so. The peace and revival of business had induced my father to remove to Boston, and try his luck again in trade. By the advice and assistance of his father and other friends, he opened a store in Cornhill, as it was then called, his father being a silent partner. We lived in a house which made the corner of School Street and Beacon Street, opposite the splendid dwellings of Mr. Samuel Phillips and Gov. Bowdoin. In this house my sister, Amelia, was born, and named so for Miss Adams, who took Amelia for her signature. I do not know how business prospered with my father. I spent much of the time at Germantown with my grandmother and aunts; that place still belonged to my grandfather, and, had he been contented to live there and cultivate it himself, as he had done so many years, he would probably have avoided much sorrow, but, long before the peace, his political ardour tempted him to embark in public affairs.



**Mrs. William S. Smith (Abigail Adams), Daughter of John and
Abigail Adams**
From an Original Picture by Copley

“My father was thought to be doing very well; his store was in Cornhill, and succeeded as well as he expected. We had recently removed from Germantown and lived in the house opposite Mr. Phillips; he kept a cow, which we brought from Germantown and used to pasture in the summer season in Park Street burying ground, among many others. It was then fenced with a common board fence, which had convenient gaps in it for the ingress and egress of those animals. When pay day came, my beloved father failed and it appeared that he had sunk all and more than all he had left. He then sold his cow, and removed soon after into the house with Mrs. Clark, and she and her son boarded with us for the rent; besides whom we had a Mrs. Barnet and your father and Dr. Moyes and suite. I was eleven [nine] years old the spring [1784] we lived there.”

Meantime General Joseph Palmer had suffered far greater losses. The story of his disaster is told with great feeling by both his daughter-in-law and his granddaughter:

[“After the peace the troubles in the money market arose. Government had issued a vast quantity of paper money in payment to the soldiers. This soon began to be depreciated in value. Hancock was now Governor of Massachusetts. My father Palmer had become involved in debt to him to a large amount. The governor publicly gave notice that he would take the Continental money at the rate of twenty-five dollars

for one dollar in payment of demands in his favor. On the strength of this notice my father sold a large tract of land he owned in Pomfret, Conn., and received a great quantity of money in payment. He called on Gov. Hancock and tendered the money. He refused to accept it, as it had fallen still more in value. My father dined with the governor and during dinner a dispute upon political points arose, and words ran high. Mr. Palmer expressed it as his opinion that; 'Congress ought to secure individuals against loss who held a large quantity of Continental money.' 'You think so, do you?' said the governor angrily, for he was a warm approver of the measures of Congress. 'Certainly, I do,' said my father. 'Then,' replied Hancock with an oath, 'I'll be the ruin of your family.' Mrs. Hancock, (Dorothy Quincy) who was a warm friend to my father, was so alarmed she left the room. The governor was ever after the implacable enemy of our house. The old gentleman failed soon after, and lost all his Germantown estate which he valued at thirty thousand pounds." E. H. P.]

"My grandfather continued to interest himself in public affairs during all the war, and after the peace, as I said before, went into business in Boston with his son. In course of business, but how or when, I was then too young to know, and do not remember anything except the results, I know he became possessed of large portions of land in Conn., and some in Vermont; this land



**Royall Tyler's niece, of whom Grandmother writes
in her Book**

(Photographed from frontispiece in "The Lady's Monthly Museum," Apr., 1806. A Biographical Sketch of Lady Ogilby interspersed with entertaining anecdotes—[with an elegant Portrait].



The Copley Portrait of Gen. Joseph Palmer

lay high up the Conn. River in what was then called the Oxbow, from the peculiar form the river takes there. These lands he succeeded in selling to advantage to some Scotch emigrants, among whom were many of the ancestors of the towns-people of Johnsbury [St. Johnsbury, Vt.] and Billysmade [Billicmead, later Sutton, Vt.]. The Conn. lands lay in Pomfret and did not turn out so fortunately. The family still remained at Germantown and I spent most of the time there, being always happier there than at home after my father moved to Boston, because by that time my mother had a houseful of babies; that is, besides Joseph and Betsey there were Hampden and Edward who were just the age to want my constant attention, being the oldest girl, and I was naughty enough not to like tending them. Betsey, on the contrary, was a sweet tempered, patient child and did like to take care of them better than to be kept under such strict regimen as she must be if under Aunt Betsey and Miss Becca Lappington. So I was permitted to have my choice.

“John Hancock about this time became Governor of Massachusetts. The Continental money, as it was called, began before this to depreciate rapidly, and many persons suffered greatly by it. In the course of business, my grandfather had borrowed of the governor a considerable amount. One day there was a large party dining with him. Politics ran very high. My grandfather was one of the guests, and, in the course of

conversation he differed on some point which was thought of consequence by Gov. Hancock who sprang from his seat, exclaiming, 'Are those your sentiments, General Palmer?' 'Certainly, sir, they are,' replied the general. 'Then I swear by all that is sacred, I will be the ruin of you and yours.' All the company rose in consternation, and endeavored to make him retract the awful oath, but in vain, and we have every reason to believe he kept it to the letter. Soon there appeared in the newspapers an advertisement, stating that Gov. Hancock would receive payment of all debts, dues and demands in Continental money as it was then going, provided it was tendered at twelve o'clock on a special day. I forget the day. My grandfather saw the notice, and eagerly catching at the chance, he hastened to saddle the horse, the only conveyance practicable where he must go into the middle of Conn., put on a pair of capacious saddle-bags and set out, determined to sell all the land he owned in Pomfret, if possible, to pay what he owed to the governor who had so publicly declared himself his enemy. The currency was sinking fast he knew, but he had previously negotiated about the sale with Dr. Taylor (who was the widowed husband of my Aunt Ruth) and hoped, by speed and determination to sell, he might get back with the money before the appointed hour should expire. He left his helpless family of invalid women in great anxiety, you may be sure; ever since the fatal dinner party they had been in

distress as to when the blow would fall. He sold his land, twenty-five dollars for one, and had his saddle-bags loaded with the price received, I forget the sum; suffice it to say he rejoiced at his success, and started for home. His family had received one letter while he was absent by a chance hand which had given them hopes of his success, now all depended upon his getting back in time. A great rain came on and obliged him to stop half a day, as it would not do to ride with his precious load in the rain, and at the inn where he stopped, he learned that the currency had fallen to fifty for one! Fortunately the rain ceased, and by riding late in the evening he arrived at one o'clock on the last day of grace. Just one hour too late, and his implacable foe would not receive it at any rate! True the currency had fallen to a hundred for one, but he would not take it even at that, and there were the beautiful Pomfret lands turned into waste paper.

“My grandfather returned to his only possessions in Germantown, dispirited and almost heartbroken, but he found kind and affectionate hearts to comfort him. Miss Eunice Payne, who was still an occupant of the red room, as it was called, brought all her wit and wisdom to cheer his drooping courage, and he revived enough to attend to his farm, and all seemed to go on as formerly; and, had not that debt still hung over them, they would have been happy, now he was thinking and con-

triving what part of his homestead he could sell to free him from debt. I was there at this time and old enough to know their trouble was about money, and that the tears I saw shed by poor Aunt Polly were from an apprehension of some great calamity about to befall her beloved father, and soon it came, in the form of an attachment upon all he possessed in Germantown. Well do I remember seeing my old and infirm grandmother, who had been for some years cosseted like a pet lamb in her chamber, come down stairs to see Thomas Daws, Esq., who had come with the sheriff as Hancock's lawyer, to see and take possession of the premises so long the abode of hospitality and benevolence. She begged to be spared the necessity of going out of the house owing to ill-health, as did Miss Payne, whose crippled hands and feet spoke more forcibly than words. The law must be obeyed, and that said, I believe, that the family must go out while formal possession was taken. My grandfather was absent; none but women at home and those entirely unacquainted with such business. Mr. Daws behaved like a kind-hearted man and advised them, no doubt, to do what was right under the circumstances. I was too young to realize all the distress, although I well remember being very much frightened at the proceedings and being told to go away, no doubt because I was troublesome, crying because others did and adding to their grief. It is such a long time since these scenes occurred that they seem to me

like a troubled dream. If I ever knew, I have now forgotten what steps were taken after this. I only know that before long the family were living in Dorchester near Boston, and we children used to walk out there occasionally; their hired house was small but comfortable, and my grandfather began planning about the great salt works, and the dam which first redeemed the land where so much of Boston is now built. When he began, the sea water came up close to the road which was called Boston Neck, at high tide, and at other times was a salt marsh where a few tons of coarse hay was cut in summer. In those salt works and ~~that~~ dam he sank all the remains of his property and much subscribed by others."

Now come the old general's death and the subsequent wreckage of the last business venture of the Palmers:

["My Father Palmer was an active old man and made many attempts to regain his property. He was always baffled until at length he established some salt works near Boston Neck, which seemed very profitable. He was much elated one day discovering that the freezing water in the salt pans produced near the same effect as evaporation. He was out that day in the cold, and got quite chilled. That night he was struck with a numb palsy and never spoke afterwards. This was as late as the year '86 ['88]. My husband engaged in the salt-making business with his father. When the old

man failed, all those who had been engaged in the business and had loaned them money to carry it on, immediately struck upon the works and entirely destroyed them, and thus was sunk the last dollar of our family property." E. H. P.]

"The salt works on Boston Neck progressed rapidly that season, but, in order to carry on the immensely expensive preparations, all the property that was left to the family after the sale of the Germantown estate was used up, and then father and son resorted to subscriptions to raise funds; these came very reluctantly for, although many were convinced by actual inspection of the work that all they anticipated might be accomplished, yet the great mercantile interest was opposed. The Liverpool traders found it profitable to bring salt for ballast in their vessels instead of sand, and, therefore, they set themselves against home manufacture, but the works were finished before winter set in, and my grandfather had a number of metal pans, large, perhaps fifteen or twenty feet square, set in brick with fireplaces under them, similar to those he had in German town; and, besides, they had dug large vats slated at the bottom and sides, into which every day the sea water was drawn by a curious set of sluices and ditches; here the sea water was expected to evaporate in hot weather and, when wanted or of proper strength, be drawn into the pans for boiling. They calculated to begin operations very soon. It was now December (1788). We had

removed from our large house, near Fort Hill, to one next to Gov. Bowdoin's on Beacon Hill (in this house my brother George was born). Our garden and his were only separated by a board fence, not so good as the one we removed this summer. Mother and Betsey and I were sitting at our needles one forenoon when my dear old grandfather entered, saying, 'Rejoice with me, my children, I have made a discovery this morning worth hundreds of dollars to me,' at the same time taking from his overcoat pocket a large cake of ice. 'Taste of it, dear,' said he. We did, it was perfectly fresh. 'This,' said he, 'froze over my vats last night and I find the brine under it stronger than many days' evaporation by sun could make it, and now we are going to draw that into the pans and begin boiling tomorrow while we shall fill again the vats from the sea. I am greatly encouraged, the frost this winter will do wonders for us.' The weather was very severe, and we begged him not to go out there again but to leave everything to my father and the men, but no, his spirits were so elated that nothing would induce him to keep away from the works. He went around to all the friends who had assisted him, showing his cake and rejoicing at the fresh prospects of success, and then hastened out to the works, where he stayed with his men, drawing the water from the sea and so forth, and taking care of everything, intending to be at work early in the morning, till past nine o'clock when he shook hands with his

son, giving him joy again and again of their bright prospects. He then went home, his family living in Roxbury Street, and my father came into Boston. He was almost frozen when he arrived and it was some time before mother and all of us by all our exertions could get him comfortably to bed. We all expressed great anxiety about the dear old man who was always inexpressibly dear to everyone of us.¹ It was now eleven o'clock and we were preparing to retire when a horse rode furiously into the yard, and a thundering knock at the door alarmed us. Mother hastened to open it; a message from Grandmother for her son to hasten to Dr. Warren and bring him out there, that his father was very ill, perhaps dying. Of course father left his bed quickly, and took the messenger's horse and hastened on his painful errand. The messenger then explained to us that, as soon as Gen. Palmer got home and seated himself at a cheerful fire his waiting family had prepared for him, he attempted to speak but could not, and seemed chilled through. His wife and daughter chafed his hands, put his feet into warm water, had a bed removed into the parlor, and finally got him into bed, but all in vain, he looked anxiously at them but

¹ Elizabeth Palmer, Mary's sister, many years later in 1845, wished her son-in-law, Nathaniel Hawthorne, (*Hawthorne and his Wife*, I, 266) to write the life of Gen. Palmer, "the incorruptible patriot, the ardent lover of freedom, the unwearied doer of public duties; the devoted husband and father, the indulgent master, the saint-like follower of the Divine Teacher."

not a word could he articulate. They then sent for the nearest physician but also despatched this man, a neighbor, for his son and Dr. Warren. They made all possible despatch. Dr. Warren carried out his electrical apparatus, and, as I understood, after trying various remedies they isolated the bedstead, and filled him and the bed full of electricity, but all to no effect. The next morning at his usual hour of rising, and at the time he meant to have commenced his operations in his salt works, his wife, standing by him, noticed that he made a feeble attempt to get up; this was his last demonstration of consciousness. He lived a week, and everything was done for him that the tenderest affections of a doting family and the medical skill of Boston could think of, but all was vain; the decree had gone forth, and, just a week from that terrible night, he sank to rest like an infant going to sleep, leaving one of the most disconsolate families possible, they had always depended solely upon him. But they were Christians and had One to depend upon now, who never forsakes the widow and the fatherless who trust Him. The children were frequently over there while he lived, and mother most of the time. Now the care of his mother and sisters would devolve upon my father. He, therefore, hired a house in Boston and removed them nearer him, as soon as the funeral was over. This additional care and expense came very heavily upon him; nevertheless, he felt good courage and would probably have

done well, if his father's creditors had acted generously. But, on the other hand, instead of letting him go on with the works which had cost them so much to complete, and which he alone had the necessary knowledge and skill to do, they would not listen to any of his propositions. He offered to make over all the property to them and become overseer under them, or go on upon his own responsibility entering into bonds to pay all debts with the first avails. Nothing would do, but they attacked all the works, took them to pieces and carried the whole concern down East, and there set them up without saying anything to my father about having any concern in the matter, and such was the amount of the debts incurred to workmen as well as to the subscribers that he felt overwhelmed and unable to do anything but let the law take its course. My brother George was then an infant. He was born in the house on Beacon Hill. Our old and sure friend [Tyler] was not in Boston at this time."

So complete had been the reversal of fortune after the affair with Hancock as to evoke the warmest sympathy of the Palmers' friends. Abigail Adams writes from England to her niece Lucy Cranch: "As for the Germantown family, my soul is grieved for them. Many are the afflictions of the righteous. Would to heaven that the clouds would disperse and give them brighter days!" Elizabeth Hunt Palmer tells in a sentence the story of unwonted poverty: "After

Father Palmer's death, we lived in Boston and took boarders." But this last resource of distressed gentle folk had already been followed with persistency that should have won success, yet gained for the family only a precarious livelihood. "Reduced circumstances" find frank and full revelation in Mary Palmer Tyler's narrative:

"My father at the same time was again unfortunate in business. Failed and opened a boarding house first in School Street¹ in a house owned by Mrs. Clark (she that was Miss Patty Curtis) now a widow, and she and her little son Sammy boarded with us; and I should have told you, that through all the Germantown troubles he (Royall Tyler) had been our constant and efficient adviser and friend, nor did he ever forsake us until his own misfortune occurred when he went home to his mother's who lived in Jamaica Plains, and there he lived for a year or two, but after this he again opened his office in Boston and boarded with us. At that time the famous Henry Moyes, the blind electrician, came to

¹ Many were the Boston homes of the Palmers during the decade of the eighties; in 1780-1782 a house near the West Church; then, after leaving Germantown in 1784, one on the corner of Beacon and School Streets (which, in the eighteenth century, ran as far as the present Somerset St., not laid out until 1801) "opposite Mr. (Samuel) Phillips," then Mrs. Clark's house "on School St., next but one to Stone Chapel," (owned once by James Otis), then a large house with a cupola near Fort Hill, (1786-1788), then a house next to Gov. Bowdoin's on Beacon Hill (1788-1789). During the last year, 1789-1790, the family was "caged in a small house in an alley that led from Cornhill into Brattle Sq."

Boston and boarded at our house.¹ Your father was much interested in his wonderful operations and used to assist him at his public lectures. He had also two assistants: Dr. Spence, who assisted in all his experiments, and a Mr. Fraser as secretary, both Scotchmen, as was the great Doctor himself. I dare say there may be some old people in Boston who remember the winter when those lectures were delivered. Electricity was not then so well understood as it is now. I remember well going with my mother and other ladies to hear and see his wonderful experiments. He had a beautiful machine, I should think three feet long, which stood upon a table. This contained his apparatus, and was hung with a vast number of little glass bells which he made play the sweetest tunes, by the electricity, and a vast variety of other wonderful things he did which elicited shouts of applause and stamping of feet and clapping of hands. One thing I recollect. He would order all the lights extinguished and then exhibit lines of poetry and various beautiful figures about his table and machine, which were altogether unaccountable to the spectators, but we, having seen them prepared at home, knew all about it. They were done by minute silver spangles which were made to adhere to glass tubes and, when the room was darkened, illuminated by electricity. He

¹In "The Bay Boy," an unpublished story valuable for its pictures of eighteenth-century Boston, Royall Tyler devotes a chapter to "the blind electrician."

would also cause it to lighten and thunder, to the great terror of many. His mechanical genius was wonderful when we consider his total blindness.”

“During the winter just described, some merchants in Boston engaged my father to go to Machias [Maine] as their agent in some lumber business which kept him away almost all winter. My mother, born and brought up in the lap of plenty, and married as a mere child as to care of all kinds, and having a husband who almost worshipped her and devoted himself for the first years of their life to saving her every anxiety, was quite inadequate to providing for such a family as was then left entirely to her care. This, perhaps, was one reason why her bills far exceeded her means of payment. Her own family consisted of herself and five children; her boarders were Mrs. Clark and son, Dr. Moyes, Dr. Spence, Mr. Fraser and your father, besides two domestics in the kitchen. Her table was always well supplied, for she had been nursed in the abode of hospitality, and, I dare say, never thought of economizing upon those who were paying for their board. Accordingly, when the Dr. and suite left, she called in her bills and found to her consternation she had not wherewith to discharge them. She immediately wrote to my father, but there were no steamboats or railways then and his business could not be left instantly, in fact many weeks elapsed and he did not come. At length, one day, an

officer came with a writ, the grocer would wait no longer, and the baker was out of patience, and several other petty demands had agreed to join and send in their claims all at once. Poor mother was frightened and distressed, we children expected to be all carried off to jail. Mother wept and entreated, assuring the officer that all would be paid when her husband came home, who was expected every day. All in vain, their duty was to have security somehow or other. I shall never forget the joy with which I heard your blessed father's footstep on the hall floor. I flew to him exclaiming, 'Oh, Mr. Tyler, how glad I am to see you. You will help us, I know.' He seized my extended hand, drawing me to him, saying, 'Why, what is the matter, my dear?' My mother heard him speak and felt as I did, that our deliverer had come. He soon sent the men away; how he settled it, I did not know, probably out of his own pocket; being one of our boarders, we were sure he would. For several years about that time, before and after this affair, he seemed to be our friend in time of need. Perhaps few men ever loved each other more devotedly and for a longer time than did he and my father. They seemed twin souls in everything that was amiable and estimable. My father loved him like a son long before he ever suspected he would be one to him. My father came home soon after this.

"Mr. Freeman had been paying his devoirs to Mrs.

Clark all winter. He had recently been called to officiate at the Stone Chapel, which he soon began to reform as he termed it; new modelled their prayer books and left out, as I now think, all the pith and marrow of Christianity, and soon changed the congregation as well as the book. He was a very eloquent preacher and drew many young folks to hear him; among the rest my father and mother and Mrs. Clark took seats there.¹ Now he wanted to be married and Mrs. Clark's house was next but one to the church and they agreed to live there; so we must move away, and my father hired a house near Fort Hill. I am told it has been pulled down since, I know it had a fine cupola on the top somewhat like our neighbor Bardil's but much larger. Your father had his bed in it all the summer. It was up four flights of stairs, and it was my business to keep it in order and make the bed every morning. That summer we had our house full of Southern boarders, William Gibbs, Esq., and his sister, Mrs. Shepard, who after two years from that time married my Uncle Sam [Samuel Hunt, the schoolmaster], as his second wife. He fell desperately in love with her that summer, but she turned the cold shoulder to all his advances that season and the

¹ Elizabeth Hunt Palmer says: "We attended the Stone Chapel, Mr. Freeman was then just settled there and George was the first child he ever baptized. He was the author of the schism between that church and the other Episcopal churches which resulted in a separation." Freeman was ordained, Nov. 18, 1787, rector of King's Chapel (Stone Chapel). J. P. Palmer held pew 18 there from 1787-1789 (Bridgeman, *History of King's Chapel*).

next, but somehow or other she took a great fancy to winter in Boston and wrote to my mother after her return South the second season, that, if she would board her the ensuing winter, she would come back and spend a year with us. Mother consented, of course, by the advice of Uncle Sam, and during that winter the bargain was made, and, before another winter occurred, he went on to South Carolina and brought her back a bride. She proved an excellent wife and mother to his children. I forget how many children they had. I remember only one daughter, Sarah, and one boy, William Gibbs. Besides this family there were in our house, the first we occupied near Fort Hill, a Mrs. Allston, another sister of William Gibbs, with a little son just beginning to run about. This was afterwards the celebrated painter Allston,¹ and a Mr. Mitchel and lady, and also Mr. Cole and lady, who was a curiosity. Mr. Cole, who was a wealthy Englishman, an old fox-hunter, then traveling for pleasure, had, while in England, fallen desperately in love with his wife, then a bar-maid in a public house, took her from her humble station, so far, as he thought, beneath her beauty and early promise, sent her to school, educated her completely and then married her.

“All this was very well, and, had the lady known ‘how

¹ This reminiscence is hardly accurate. Washington Allston, born in South Carolina, Nov. 5, 1779, was at this time about six years old. His mother, widow of Capt. William Allston, who had served under Marion, had married a Northerner, Dr. Henry C. Flagg, and was, therefore, Mrs. Flagg.

to bear her blushing honors,' he would have been' well paid for his pains, but, like many who rise suddenly in this world, she thought that to be a lady she must put on all sorts of airs, so that she made herself perfectly ridiculous. When at table, if anything like fish, or any highly flavored dish, happened to be near her, she would faint, or pretend to, and set the company all in confusion; one gentleman would hasten with water, and another with sal volatile, and another open a window, another run with a fan, while her husband, who sat by her and held her up, would sit perfectly quiet till madame chose to come to herself, and the offensive viand was removed to a proper distance. This she frequently did, till they had been there some weeks when one evening the company were gathered together around the table, a gay party, when the servant brought in a lobster salad, and whether he did it on purpose or not, no one knew, but he set the dish directly before her. She immediately begged it might be removed, and fainting laid her pretty head on her husband's shoulder; a bustle immediately commenced as usual, but the old gentleman gestured to stop, saying, 'Pooh, Pooh, it is all my eye.' A laugh ensued, the lady revived, and I believe did not faint at table again while at our house. The Southern ladies exhibited a bright contrast to this new-made lady. One evening Mr. Cole and lady, and some of the gayer Southerners had been out to some evening party where they had been playing

cards. Mrs. Cole came in leaning upon her husband's arm. She was a splendid looking woman, tall and finely formed. He was, or had been, a good looking man, but was somewhat bent with age and lame with gout. I was in the hall when they came in with my father who opened the door for them, our servant having been sent to bed long ago. Madame walked along with a princely air, saying, 'Only see here, Mr. Palmer,' (holding up the flounce of her elegant white satin dress) 'see here! Here is my purse containing fifty guineas, hanging in my flounce! What wonder I had not lost it when I alighted from the carriage!' There being no one present but my father and her husband, she did not faint then. They soon after sailed for England. They had several servants, which, together with several black gentlemen and ladies, astonished our Yankee domestics. When the party first came into our house, Mr. Gibbs called all his servants, two men and four or five women belonging severally to the ladies, into our dining room, and told them that, according to the laws of Massachusetts, they were all free and at liberty to leave if they chose, but with one voice they protested they would not leave master or missus on any account. Probably they were picked servants who would answer, he knew, so. One of the women, sixty years old, had nursed Mrs. Gibbs from her birth and was treated by her with as much tenderness as if she was her mother, excepting that she had been taught to know her place

and keep it. Although there were so many of these great hearty wenches, all the washing even for the blacks and all was put out of our house every week, ironing also, so that they had nothing to do but wait upon their mistresses and keep their rooms in order and look after little Allston.

“In September of that year (1786) and in that house your Aunt Pickman (Sophia Palmer) was born, one of the loveliest babes that ever came into this hard world. The second year of our sojourn in that house, my grandfather was in full action about the salt-works, and all his laborers who were making that long dam, boarded in our kitchen, that is, they took their dinners there, several of them who were from the country. One old man, I remember, took a great fancy to Betsey and me and used to take one on each knee and enlarge eloquently upon the beauties of his home and tell us about his lambs and calves, the butter and cheese his wife made, and urge us to go home with him and smell the ‘mellifluous’ flowers and new hay. We longed to go, of course, but never did. We did not have so many Southerners there that summer, but Mr. Gibbs and lady and infant, and Mrs. Shepard, to the satisfaction of Uncle Sam, came and stayed till late in the autumn.

“Another great event occurred while we lived there,¹

¹ Royall Tyler's part in the suppression of Shays' Rebellion, which necessitated his first visit to Vermont, afterwards his home, belongs to the year 1787.

the Shays' Rebellion, as it was called, and your father was aide to Gen. Lincoln when the troops were ordered out by Gov. Bowdoin to suppress it. This was the only military expedition I believe that your father undertook, but at that time politics ran wild as they often do and Gov. Hancock had been superseded by Gov. Bowdoin, much to the annoyance of one party and joy of the other. Hancock was what is now called a Democrat, Bowdoin Federalist, and the changes incident upon this was the cause of the disturbance. This is now all a matter of history. I am not otherwise interested in it than that it took away the light of our house, so far, at least, as I was concerned. To have him go where there would be fighting, took away my happiness. He promised to write to my father as often as possible, and he did so. Some years ago Amelia [Amelia Sophia Tyler] and myself undertook to look through a trunk full of letters, old family letters. And I recollect we came across one of his to my father at that time, in which by way of postscript he sent his love to his "little wife." Perhaps it was the postscript to which the letter owes its preservation, but I am not sure. I should like to see it again, but it would be like looking for a needle of the finest treasure in a bundle of hay, to undertake to find it. You all remember with what zest he used to relate his adventures during that expedition when he took a meeting-house full of Shays' men. He found their arms stacked outside the door,

while they were within, probably listening to some Yankee Cromwell, who excited them to resist oppression and unjust rulers. Your father walked in followed by a file of soldiers, and ascending the pulpit steps with his wonted elegance spoke so forcibly on the other side that they finally agreed to lay down their arms and return home, soon after which Shays was apprehended and the rebellion quelled. How much good his speech did I know not, but I do know that, whatever his theme, he very seldom spoke in vain, sometimes perhaps 'making the worse appear the better reason'; but few were the audiences who could resist his eloquence. I always thought his power consisted greatly in the remarkably melodious intonation of his voice aided by as remarkable insight into human nature. He would be grave or gay, serious or frivolous, according to the subject he was treating, or the characters of his audience. Is it not remarkable that, although I lived with him almost half a century and knew him from the time he first became famous at the bar, I never heard him speak in public except once I heard him deliver an oration on the death of Washington?¹ I hope you will be amused with these frequent episodes. But to return to family matters.

"By the way, I will relate here an anecdote told me a few days ago, that I had forgotten if I ever heard it be-

¹ A printed copy of this is preserved in the Billings Library of the University of Vermont.

fore. It was related to me by Judge Kellogg of this village (Brattleboro), who said he had it from Governor Chittenden many years ago. It seems that, after the breaking of the Shays' forces, Shays fled into this state. Gov. Bowdoin had information that he was about Lake Champlain and, of course, made a formal demand of him as a state criminal. Still it was understood, that, if he would clear out of the country, no very strict search would be made. Your father, as aide to Gen. Lincoln, was sent with the despatches to Gov. Chittenden to demand Shays. He arrived at the Governor's residence one evening. A great stir was made. Some said Shays had been there a day or two ago, but no one knew where he was then; but no doubt he would be about the next day. Your father and suite were treated very politely. The Governor invited your father to his house and treated him most hospitably; and meantime, no doubt, proper means were taken to find the culprit. The next morning a splendid breakfast awaited his guest in the Governor's parlor. After which a hue and cry was instituted after Shays. Sheriffs and posse were sent in every direction. At length Gov. Chittenden said to your father, 'I fear, Major, the bird has flown.' He answered with a peculiar smile, 'Very well, your Excellency, never mind, never mind, no doubt Shays has taken good care of himself by this time.' So proper papers were exchanged, and your father left, not being able to find the rogue who probably was being

helped across the lake, while the officers of justice slept. This was probably the first time your father was in Vermont, and the visit was for that reason interesting to us all!

“Your father, after the Shays’ Rebellion was over, went to New York, and then it was that he began his literary career. The winter my grandfather died was the time ‘The Contrast’ was written and had such a wonderful run that winter.¹ The ‘May-Day in Town’ also was brought out as an afterpiece with unusual success.² Like most authors of that day, I expect the honor and reputation was his chief reward, he was petted, caressed, feasted and toasted, and no doubt lived too freely; at any rate, after his return, he rusticated with his mother again, and, after only a few visits of condolence and sympathy regretting that he could not help us, we saw no more of him for four or five years. Why it was we could not discover, but his spirits were greatly depressed. It is possible he may have met those in New York or seen them, that he never wished to see, but he would not communicate his grief.

¹ Royall Tyler’s play “The Contrast,” heralded with great acclaim, was successfully produced on April 16, 1787, by Wignell and the American Company in the John Street Theatre, New York, and was played many times after not only there but in many cities. It was the first comedy by an American author staged by a professional company. “The Contrast” has been many times printed. See Helen Tyler Brown’s introduction to the 1920 edition.

² A month after the first appearance of “The Contrast” Tyler produced a comic opera in two acts called “May-Day in Town” or “New York in an Uproar.” The text of this has been lost.

“We had only one boarder at this time, Mr. Standfast Smith. He had boarded with us two or three years and was loth to leave us then, but my father thought best to reduce his family if possible. About this time my brother, Joseph, who had hitherto attended his Uncle Sam's Grammar School, as it was called, and who was now about fourteen years old, was thought old enough to learn some business, as the altered circumstances of the family precluded all hope of education, and he decided to go to sea; friends were consulted and all agreed that, if that was his decided inclination, it was best to let him go, and he was entered as a cabin-boy with a Capt. Scott, who traded regularly to Liverpool, and who sometime afterward married the widow of Gov. Hancock, and became wealthy; but poor Joe found him a hard master, and sailed with him but one voyage. He said, the first week after they left Boston, it being his duty to set the captain's table and wait upon it, the captain came to his breakfast one morning, and, taking his seat, took up his knife and fork and, after looking at them a moment, exclaimed, ‘Here, you little rascal, did you put these here?’ ‘Yes, sir,’ and instantly they were flung at his head. He dodged them but received a volley of oaths such as the poor child had never heard before, and which frightened him excessively; but he soon got habituated to them, secretly resolving if he lived to get home, not to sail with that captain again. He did live to get home and his father suc-

ceeded in apprenticing him with a captain with whom he continued till of age, when he was advanced to be mate.

“About this time, our old friend, Miss Rebecca Lappington, was married to a Mr. Hurd, a merchant in Boston. She and her sister, after the sad breaking up of their Germantown home, had supported themselves by their needle till the death of the first Mrs. Hurd, when Miss Rebecca became his housekeeper. He had several small children, and, while with Aunt Betsey, she had served a good apprenticeship to the art of governing and educating them; and she proved herself so much of an adept that both father and children loved her dearly. My mother went to see her frequently, and they had at first a hearty cry over past times and recent misfortunes. Times grew worse and worse with us; in just a year from my grandfather’s death, his wife, who had lived with her two daughters in a small house at the south end of Boston, was seized with paralysis and died in a few days [Feb. 6, 1790]. And now came Aunt Betsey’s old and faithful lover, Joseph Cranch, from West Point, where he was stationed by government, superintendent of the United States Armory there, to keep all in repair and good order. He had been there for several years, but now my aunt let him know how desolate they were, and he immediately came to Boston and pressed his former suit with such success that he soon married Betsey and took her infirm sister with them to West

Point, to the region of guns and gunpowder, where they lived a number of years, happy and contented. There is nothing like serious affliction to cure us of imaginary troubles. Aunt Polly soon habituated herself to the sight and hearing of the guns and, before she died, grew fat and rosy, they said, and as courageous as ever almost, but we never saw her after. She died and was buried at West Point.

CHAPTER IV

A VISIT TO NEW YORK (1789)

Elbridge Gerry and his wife—Mary enters their household with high hopes—her disillusionment—the pangs of servitude. Arrival in New York—the home of the Thompsons—a New York family—a real rowdy—the fears of small pox. The theatre—Royall Tyler's play. "The Contrast"—praise and blame. The inauguration of Washington—the august ceremony—Mary's impressions. Gay life in New York—parties and dresses—President and lady at tea. The romance of Mr. Cole—"crabbed age and youth." The return to Boston—happy homecoming—visit to Miss Payne. Letters of a partial parent.

Now comes that most exciting incident in a young girl's life, her visit to a big city. Little Mary Palmer's impressions of New York were limited by her extreme youth, for she was only fourteen, and her spirit was saddened by her anomalous position in the household of the Gerrys'; though coming from a family that had always met theirs on equal terms, she was deemed a domestic rather than a guest. Yet the metropolis in 1789, the place and time of Washington's first inauguration, had very many wondrous sights for the quick eyes of this observant maiden. And then too, he who was always her hero was much in men's mouths, for his play was mightily in vogue just then. As her "Memoirs"

show, all the happenings, big or little, of her journey to and from the capital, and of her stay there, sank deep into her tenacious memory:

“Another episode of my checkered life, which Amelia urges me to record here, is my visit to New York in the year 1789. Elbridge Gerry, Esq., was chosen one of the first representatives under the Federal Constitution. He had married a New York lady. Her parents still lived there, but Mr. Gerry lived in an elegant country seat at Cambridge. When the time drew near when he must go to New York, as Congress was to sit there, my Aunt Catherine, who lived with her mother at Watertown and had continued her early acquaintance with Mr. Gerry, and had become intimate in his family, came to Boston one day and told my parents that Mrs. Gerry was inquiring for some little girl about fourteen who would like to go with them to New York and assist her in tending her baby about four months old, and she thought it would be a pleasant trip for me; that she (Mrs. Gerry) intended to have her two small children inoculated for the small pox as soon as she got to the city, and said, if I would go, I should be inoculated also; that Mrs. Gerry was a very lovely woman and would treat me as her own child and so forth. Now you must bear in mind that this was the darkest time in my father's life. His father and mother had recently died, and his sisters had gone to West Point. He himself was clerk in a store with a very small salary; my

mother had an infant in her arms not a year old, George (who has lately died in Boston), and five other children besides myself and Joe, who was gone to sea. You will understand the idea of my going where I should be appreciated and introduced to some of the first people, some of whom, she flattered herself would notice me, for my grandfather's and father's sake, observing to me, with a true mother's feeling, 'afterwards they will love you for your own sake.' Thus we were all persuaded to think it was a fine thing, an opening which might lead to some useful and pleasant acquaintance. Accordingly, my parents consented and I was well pleased to go.

"Aunt Kate came at the appointed time and took me and my little trunk to Cambridge, and left me. Mr. Gerry came to the door and she introduced me. He received me with his wonted suavity and preceded me into a room and presented me to a handsome lady saying, 'Here, wife, Miss Hunt has brought your little girl.' She turned to me and said, 'How do you do?' with a pleasant smile, but coldly; turning to a young woman who seemed to be assisting her packing for the journey asked her to show me up to the nursery, and where to put my things. All this was so entirely different from what I expected that my heart sunk within me. I saw I was considered a servant; had this been told me or my parents before I came from home, I might have been prepared, and, if my parents thought best, no doubt I

should have submitted, but such a thought never entered my heart till that moment when there was no escape. I had long known, that my father and Mr. Gerry had been intimate friends in the days of our prosperity, and foolishly expected to be received and treated like the child of an old friend in adversity.¹ I knew I was to tend the baby, but, in my utter ignorance of the world, learnt then for the first time that my poverty would make me unworthy of being received with kindness and consideration. I went with a heavy heart to the nursery, where was a woman with the baby in her lap, and a little four-year-old girl playing about the room with her doll. The woman spoke kindly to me and enlarged upon what a nice place it was for me and so forth, and soon asked me to take the baby, as she had a great deal to do, as the family went on Monday. This was Saturday. I could tend the baby; that was what I had done ever since I could remember anything, and took it. I could scarcely restrain my tears, I could not speak, but walked the room with my little charge, till Mrs. Gerry came and told me to go, with the young woman who entered with her, to the hall where their tea was ready and she would nurse the babe the while; I suspected this was the servants' hall, and would not go, saying I did not wish for any tea. They urged me, but I persisted, and went supperless to

¹ With the Gerrys' treatment of an old friend's daughter, one naturally contrasts Gen. Palmer's hospitality to Miss Payne and the Lappingtons.

bed that night. Oh, what would I not have given to be at home where I had always been loved and petted more than I deserved and here everyone looked cold and strange towards me; no doubt I behaved very badly and no one could like me. The house was very grand; and beautiful carpets and splendid pictures and furniture adorned every room, but the idea that I was to be a servant, and no one to love me for a year to come, quite outweighed everything; even the journey, which I had anticipated so much, had lost all interest.

“The next morning I felt calmer, but dreadful homesick! Again I was told to go to the hall for breakfast. I went, and was surprised to see a large room with a long table set, surrounded by domestics of every age and appearance, only they were all white people. I believe I counted them, but dare not say how many were there. The woman who had the baby, when I first went to the nursery, sat at the head of the table and presided over the coffee and tea, and a middle-aged man sat at the foot; these, as I learned afterwards, were the housekeeper and steward, who were to take care of all things till master came back, and appeared decent people, but the rest were the most vulgar rude set I ever had seen, both in manners and language. I took a little breakfast, and left the table more heartsick than ever. This was Sunday, and I believe some of the ladies and gentlemen went to church somewhere; I did not learn till afterwards that they were Episcopa-

lians. The next day the New York stage came for us. I should have said that ever after that Sunday morning, as long as I stayed in the family, my meals were sent up to me in the nursery; why this was, I know not, for I did not dare to complain and said nothing, but think it was Mr. Gerry's arrangement. Whenever he was in the nursery, he always spoke kindly to me, inquiring after my friends and so forth, but this was very seldom; he was very much immersed in that most absorbing of all sciences, politics, which allowed him very little time with his family. The Federal Constitution was just going into operation, and I suppose all hearts were anxious at that time who knew anything about public affairs, much more those who were immediately concerned in them.

“The first thing that was attended to after we arrived in New York was the inoculation. We went directly to Mrs. Gerry's father's in Maiden Lane. They lived in an ordinary house; we ascended two or three stone steps and entered a hall, rather contracted. The nursery maid, myself and the children were shown directly to a nursery, a small room very confined compared to the spacious one in Cambridge, but there, as in Cambridge, I found Mr. and Mrs. Gerry were to sleep; the bed with white curtains looked very neat, although the room was small. I was to sleep in a little dark closet, just large enough to hold a bedstead; this opened into the nursery and seemed to have been fixed on purpose

for me. This family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Thompson; two daughters, Miss Catherine and Miss Helen; and one son, who was a real rowdy and a constant distress to them all, and was, several times that season I was there, brought home after the family had retired, dead drunk. His sweet sister Helen always sat up in her room waiting for him lest his father should hear the disturbance; she watched for the ringing of the door bell, and was there to answer it; he was brought home by his associates and Helen engaged their servant man to be ready to take him with her help to his room. Once in the summer he had a real rowdy fight, and was so awfully beat and bruised, that they thought he was dead when he was brought in, so that they were obliged to call a physician, and he kept the house some weeks and was a torment to me till I complained to Mrs. Gerry. This with other things made me resolve to go home with Mr. Gerry when Congress rose. But I have got before my story.

“I found Mrs. Gerry very kind, and her sister Helen quite companionable with me in the nursery, which soon made me a little more contented. The inoculation I dreaded, childlike, and, after I began to feel sick, my homesickness returned. I felt sure I should die and nobody would care. I recollect old Mr. Thompson called me to him one day and, after condoling with me about being homesick till he made me cry, he began to joke me about the small pox, telling me he

supposed it would spoil my beauty; 'but it won't,' says he, 'you shall have one pustule here,' touching my forehead between my eyebrows, 'and one on the tip of your nose and one on your chin, and that is all, so don't cry any more.' I tried to behave better and, as the doctor said we must keep out in the air when the weather would permit, the nurse and I were sent out to walk every pleasant day, and this was delightful to me. The children I soon learnt to love, and they loved me, so we got along well. The ladies frequented the theatres constantly, and your father's play, 'The Contrast' was acted every night for some weeks so that I heard Mrs. Gerry and the other ladies constantly talking about it, and telling of its wonderful success. Charlotte and Jonathan were the favorite characters.¹ It certainly tells well for the improvement in manners. I know no ladies in these days who would relate and laugh over those broad vulgar jokes. And those are delicate compared with 'Tom Jones', which my mother Miss Fenno, and Miss Curtis used to sit and hear read aloud by my father, Israel Keith and Foster Candy, while they were visitors at Germantown. I don't say we are any better in the eye of our Great Judge than they were, but there is a great change in the manners of good society since I used to stand by my mother, de-

¹ In "The Contrast" Charlotte is the lovely young sister of Col. Manly, the hero, and Jonathan is the rustic, the first stage-Yankee in the American drama, Billy Dimple is the near-villain. As a Victorian old lady, Grandmother Tyler is proof against her husband's "jokes."

lighted to hear the adventures of 'Tom Jones'. But I am wandering from my story.

"We in the nursery used to have the benefit of the delight those ladies and Mr. Gerry enjoyed at the theatre. We had to sit up for them and keep a fire, and, when they came, they all congregated there and acted o'er again Billy Dimple and Jonathan, night after night, to my great delight, because they praised the wonderful genius of the author in hitting off the Yankees in such masterly manner. They criticised the play, I remember, very hardly, but I cannot remember what they said, I only remember I did not like that part of the conversation. At that time you must bear in mind, I was a mere child, sitting by, listening, and had never read the play, being it was written the winter before, or the early part of that winter. I said nothing of my acquaintance with the author and they never thought of it, probably.

"At length the important Fourth of March drew nigh ['A natural mistake. Washington was inaugurated April 30.' T. P. T.], when Washington was to be inaugurated the first president of this country, rescued from the dominion of England through the blessing of Providence on his unwavering patriotism and profound wisdom and valor. We, that is, the children and myself, had recovered from the small pox, and I had the promise of going with nurse to the house of a friend of hers, near Federal Hall, in the open gallery of which it was decided the ceremony of taking the oath of office

was to be performed, administered by Chancellor Livingston. Accordingly, I went and stood in a stoop, as they were called, directly across a street from the Federal Hall.¹ It never rained faster, I thought, than it did that day. We waited long for the procession. The streets were crowded. At length, a quick movement among them told us it was approaching. It approached, the Father of his Country, bare-headed, only defended by an umbrella, walked at its head. Several gentlemen surrounded him. He was dressed in a citizen's dress, the cloth of American manufacture, of a dark brown color; I believe the whole dress alike, coat, vest, and breeches reaching just below the knee, and silk stockings; shoes and buckles, and buckles at the knees. I did not know these particulars at the time but learned them from Mr. Gerry afterwards. As the procession drew near where I stood, I exerted myself to see the great man, and did so sufficiently to convince me that all the pictures we have of him, although varying, are yet like him. He passed on, entered the hall and for a few minutes the crowd surged to and fro, almost impatient of the pitiless storm. Everyone must have been drenched through that could not find shelter in the neighboring houses. Umbrellas were scarce articles then and would have been a poor protection at best.

¹ Federal Hall, on the corner of Wall and Nassau Streets, later the site of the United States sub-Treasury. This was directly in front of City Hall, next door to which, as M. P. T. tells us, the Thompsons lived later in her stay with them.

At length, the great doors of the gallery were thrown open, and several gentlemen came out; when a shout of huzzas rent the air, and stopped all proceedings. Where I stood, I could not see the features, it was too distant, dark and rainy, but I could see the interesting pantomime as, after this burst of feeling had subsided, the ceremony proceeded. I saw the Chancellor read from a paper what we all supposed to be the oath; I saw Washington bow himself and kiss the sacred volume. When the Chancellor waved his hat, saying, 'Long live George Washington!', this was a sign that the ceremony was completed; when all that immense crowd tossed their hats in the air and almost rent their throats with hurrahs for several moments, repeating, 'Long live George Washington!' while he answered their enthusiasm by repeated bows on all sides. Thus ended this august ceremony, and I felt it paid me for all the silly mortification I had felt in coming to the City under such circumstances.

In May following the family removed into a house in Broadway, next door to the City Hall of that day. The house made the corner of a lane leading down to a river. That is all I remember. I have an idea that it was called Princess Street, but am not sure. There was one circumstance in that family, Mr. Thompson's, I mean, which I often think of since; it was the paucity of the young ladies' wardrobes compared with the present time. Each of them had one silk dress for parties,

one white muslin for afternoons, and one calico for morning dress. These were all I saw during the nine months I tarried there. Dining parties were frequent, and Miss Thompson was always invited when Mrs. Gerry was, and then she generally wore her own dress, which was a dark sea-green gown, with a long trail, with a tight waist, and the skirt of the dress plaited almost all behind, that is, coming forward only to her hips, and tastefully trimmed. This was worn over a rich white watered lutestring skirt, flounced with three flounces of softer gauze, trimmed and looped up with bows of ribbon the color of the dress. There was a white stomacher to the dress tastefully trimmed like the skirt. The sleeves were tight to the arms to the elbow and trimmed with deep ruffled cuffs of silk, and lace ones inside. It was a very elegant dress, and set off her fine figure, tall and majestic, to very great advantage. She wore kid gloves or lace if she chose. Helen's dress was much less elaborate. She was just beginning to go into company, and sometimes wore some of her sister Gerry's dresses to the balls and assemblies. Her dress was a lilac-colored lutestring, made plain for the mode. Mrs. Gerry had a large trunk full of elegant dresses, and often dressed her sister in them, when any especially dressed party came off, and they were all invited. The scantiness of their wardrobes was perhaps owing to embarrassed circumstances. I learned from Helen that her mother's brother had

formerly been engaged in mercantile business with her father, that they had failed; her uncles were very rich, and, her father thought, had wronged him out of a great deal of money. He had commenced a law-suit against them which was then pending. I heard afterwards that he recovered his suit, so I suppose young James, who was such a worthless character, had money enough to complete his ruin, unless he reformed very much. There was but one party given at the house while I was there, and that was a tea-party. The company assembled at (they would now think in New York) horrid unfashionable hours. There were the President and lady, Mr. and Mrs. Smith¹ and many others, a large room full. I had been told to be ready, when sent for, to bring the baby to be seen by the company. Accordingly, when sent for, I did so. You may possibly realize my feelings when I knew myself in the room with those who formerly were entertained so often at my father's and grandfather's hospitable board, and now I dared not lift my eyes to any face present. I just followed Mrs. Gerry's voice, who bid me bring the child to her. She said, 'Wait, and take him again,' so I stood like a silly thing, with my eyes fixed on the floor till called to take him, and hastened out. As I went, I thought I heard something said about me, but

¹ "Mr. and Mrs. Smith" are Abby Adams and her husband, Col. William Smith, who were now in New York with Vice-President and Mrs. Adams.

I could not hear what. It was then before sundown, I remember, but what time I cannot say. Tea was sent round by menservants hired, I suppose, for the occasion. One, I believe, was Mr. Gerry's own servant. I stood at the chamber window, when the company arrived, and was told by Helen which was Mrs. Washington. She was short and thick, and I saw when she alighted from her carriage that she had a dressy cap on her head, but no bonnet of course. She was dressed in a light silk. The weather was warm, and she had an embroidered shawl, white, thrown over her shoulders. I was told by Helen that Mrs. Adams and daughter were there, but I did not recognize them; indeed, I did not look at anybody when I went into the room, and probably should not have known them if I had, as several years had elapsed and children soon forget faces.

"There was one pleasant event occurred while I was there which I will relate for the amusement of the youthful among you. There came to that session of Congress from Virginia a Mr. Cole. He was somewhat advanced in life, a widower with two sons, grown-up lawyers in Virginia. This venerable man became desperately enamoured of Miss Catherine Thompson, and made a formal offer of his hand and heart. He was reported to be immensely rich in land and negroes, and, though older than her father, and not so good looking, being lame from repeated attacks of gout, yet that beautiful

girl accepted at once, and, before I left that autumn, they were married. It requires the largest mantle of charity to prevent one from thinking that his position overpowered every other consideration. She was naturally proud, her position depressed owing to her father's misfortunes. Her sister had married a member of Congress much older than herself, and why should not she? True, Mr. Gerry was a handsome man compared to Mr. Cole, what then? Catherine would now be far above her in wealth at least; and then, no doubt, she felt flattered, and grateful, to find her personal charms outweigh all other considerations in the eyes of her lover. They had rather a private wedding; were married at her father's, just before, or about the time Congress rose, and went on a journey, whether directly home, I do not remember; no doubt the sons envied their father his beautiful bride. How they received her as a mother I never heard. I heard her brother James joke her very hard after her engagement about those sons, telling her she had better wait for one of them. She retorted by telling him 'she far preferred Mr. Cole to any of the young scamps of the present day.' No doubt he felt the insinuation and said no more.

"When Congress rose, Mr. Gerry said he must go home to see to his affairs, but Mrs. Gerry decided not to go. She had buried her babe in the summer, and could not return where everything would recall him so vividly to her mind. He was four months old when she left home,

an interesting age to every mother; was a sickly infant, and she hoped change of air and inoculation might renovate his constitution; but he gradually declined in a consumption and died before he was a year old. Their little girl was a fine child. I heard afterwards that they had others born. I wrote home begging to return with Mr. Gerry for I was dreadful homesick, and besides felt a suspicion that I was not wanted after the child's death, being employed exclusively with my needle. My parents consented, and I prepared joyfully to return to my dear home. Our folks had removed to another house during my absence, and children always like to see the new dwelling. This, I suppose, added to my homesickness, and I was soon clasped to my beloved father's heart. Oh, the luxury of being so loved! Mother and sisters, brothers flocked around me. What joy after such an absence! Soon after I returned, all our family had the measles at once, except father and mother and Hampden, who charitably waited until the rest had recovered before he came down; but our girl in the kitchen left us from fear of the disease, so that Hampden was the only one to take care of the baby, or wait upon the sick, while mother was about family business. In those days the physician shut his patients with measles up in their rooms and beds without a breath of air; consequently the disease was much more virulent than it usually is in these days, especially since the days of homeopathy.

“But I must tell you a little anecdote of Mr. Gerry’s fatherly feeling. When we were riding the last stage of our journey home, he took from his pocket a silver dollar, and asked me to go to some toy shop, and buy something for him to carry to Catherine. He told me where to find him, and wished me to bring whatever I got to him within a few days, as he should leave Boston very soon. So Betsey and I dressed ourselves one day and sallied out, proud of our commission, although we found our dollar would not buy much. I knew the child had almost everything already, and was sadly puzzled what to get. At length I found a set of cups and saucers, plates and dishes of bright pewter, with a roast pig painted on one dish, and a turkey on another, and vegetables of various kinds on others, besides fruit dishes, and so forth, all in a box which just came to the money; and I bought it, and we carried it to Mr. Gerry. He professed himself satisfied, with a very cursory inspection. All I could say for my purchase was I knew it was something she had not got. I here took leave of Mr. Gerry for the last time.

“Betsey and I then thought of Miss Eunice Payne, who, my mother had been telling me since my return, was now staying with her brother, Robert Treat Payne, Esq.,¹ who then lived in an elegant house in Milk Street. We remembered her at Germantown, and de-

¹ Robert Treat Payne (1731–1814), Member of Continental Congress and Signer of the Declaration of Independence.

cided to call and see her; accordingly we called. We rang some time; at length a footman opened the door. We inquired if Miss Eunice Payne was at home. We thought the man looked very peculiarly at us, hesitated and then said, 'Yes,' and asked us to walk in, leading the way and throwing open the door of a splendid room, where sat a gentleman reading in an armchair near a blazing fire in an elegant Franklin fireplace. It was a cold day in October, I believe, or November. The air of the room was delicious after our cold walk; the man had set us chairs near the fire; we sat down expecting, of course, to be called to Miss Payne's room or to see her enter, the gentleman kept on reading, till at length he asked if we wanted anyone in particular; I answered we called to see Miss Eunice Payne. 'Oh!' said he, and rang the bell; the footman appeared; 'Show these misses to Miss Payne's room.' We rose and followed, and were conducted up two flights of stairs into a room large and bare and cold. The poor old lady, who, we had been taught, must have the best room and every kind of care and attention, sat upon a low stool or cricket, huddled over a miserable little fireplace like a little oven, such as I have seen in garrets; one or two little short sticks thrust in endwise was all the fire she had to warm her shivering limbs. She straightened up a little when we entered, but did not know us; we had to tell her who we were; at our names the tears came to her eyes. She enquired about

the family, mentioned my grandfather and grandmother, rejoiced that they were at rest; was glad to hear Betsey [Elizabeth Palmer] was married and settled so comfortably. She enquired after poor Polly. We told her that we heard her health was much better. Her poor rheumatic fingers continued all drawn out of shape, and the room was so cold we wondered how she could endure it. While we sat there, Miss Payne, a young lady of about seventeen, we thought, came into the room. Miss Eunice introduced us. She bowed coldly, asked her aunt if she wanted anything, who answered 'No,' then she disappeared. There was a little pile of wood on one side of the chimney for replenishing the fire; a bed with no curtains, which in those days was considered the mark of great poverty, two very ordinary chairs, nothing like a rocking chair to rest her weary painful limbs, no carpet on the floor and so forth. But she spoke up with her usual cheerful tone, for which she had been remarkable at Germantown, but did not ask us to call again or to ask our mother to do so, although she said she longed to see her. Our hearts were ready to burst with indignation at seeing her thus, and her heartless brother sitting by his cheerful fire, over his warm carpet, in a luxurious armchair! It was said that Miss Eunice's share of their father's property was left in his hands, enough to support her, but, if this was not the case, it was his duty to make her more happy and comfortable. We took our leave of the

dear old lady, and that was the last time I ever saw her. Mrs. Curtis and Mrs. Peabody and her children saw her at various times afterwards. I know not how or by whose influence it came about, but, after we removed to Framingham, we heard that her brother placed her in a respectable family in Dorchester to board; some of our friends visited her there in the summer and found her in a garden chair which went on wheels, in which she could move herself about in a degree, and seemed very happy, and there I believe she died.

I will now record for your amusement, my children, several letters I received from my beloved father while I was in New York in the summer of 1789. I do this that you may become somewhat acquainted with him, and learn from his own pen, how saintlike he bore up under his accumulated misfortunes. The following is the earliest date. Some have the date torn off."

"BOSTON, 22d. March, 1789.

"MY DEAR POLLY:

"This evening we received your good letters to Betsey and Miss Tileston. We paid a tear of joy and said you was a sweet girl! This is the second time we have heard from you since you left us. Continue to write as often as you have the opportunity without infringing on the attentions you owe to the good family you are in. Your style is pleasing, because natural; persevere in this method of writing, think no circumstance that ar-

rests your attention too trivial to relate; its merely coming from your pen insures itself approbation from your partial parents, and I dare vouch for many others.

“I beg you to keep your spirits as unembarrassed as possible, nothing so necessary. Play, romp and dissipate as much as possible; ’tis necessary during the operation of the small-pox, which God grant you a happy passage through! And indeed such is your constitution that (humanly speaking) I am sure of your having it favorably. I enclose a few lines to Dr. Crosby which you will kindly endeavor to have sent to him; he did live in Chapple Street, where he lives now I know not, but let him live where he will, he is worthy of every good man’s attention. Adieu!

“Your affectionate friend and parent,

“JOS. P. PALMER.”

MISS POLLY H. PALMER.

“BOSTON, 11th of April, 1789.

“MY DEAR POLLY:

“A few days since, I was honored with a letter from Mr. Gerry. Though he mentions nothing as to your health, yet it was a relief; for we presume, if you had been particularly unwell, he would have noticed it. We have heard nothing from you since yours to your sister; and,

as you then expected to be inoculated in a few days, we hope you are now on the recovery. We remain much as when you left us, supporting ourselves by the hope of better days. We have, indeed, a tolerable prospect of obtaining a very convenient house for taking boarders, and, if we succeed, it is probable I may find some other employment. 'Tis not impossible but I may pay you a visit at New York, but the springs of men's actions are so hid that we know very little but by events. We are all in good health; this is a blessing which demands our gratitude. We are too apt to charge our happinesses and misfortunes, without giving credit for the many boons with which a kind Providence favours us. Not having a letter from Dr. Crosby, makes me suspect that he has removed from that city. In your next, please to advise, whether he has or not. If he finds you out, I am sure he will pay you attention, first for my sake, and then for your own. What a happiness it is (since it seemed necessary that we should part) that you should have fallen into so kind and so worthy a family! Even if our circumstances had been eligible, still you may derive many advantages from such an excursion, which you could not from staying at home. 'Tis not likely that you will have an opportunity of being in much company, and I am certain you will be careful to be in none but what is good. But perhaps you will have some leisure to read, and here you will have a very great advantage from your situation, as I

dare say Mr. and Mrs. Gerry will be ever ready to advise and assist you to suitable books. It is an intolerable chagrin to spend much time and attention, to find out that a book is not worth reading!

“Writing is a useful and pleasing amusement, and I flatter myself, that, with a little care, you will excel in it. I say little, because too much will tend to render your style stiff and too little, inaccurate.

“My respectful compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Gerry, and believe me, my dear Polly, Your tenderly affectionate father,

“JOS. P. PALMER.”

“BOSTON, (date torn out) March, 1789.

“MY DEAR POLLY:

“We received yours to your mother this evening; enclosed you have her answer. As my circumstances are, my dear girl, I am rejoiced that you are absent from me, and present with so good and admirable a family. Mr. Gerry I have known for a number of years, and every year esteemed him more than the last, and, if I had never heard of Mrs. Gerry, I must more than esteem her from reading your very good letter. Continue to use your utmost endeavors to deserve their kindness. The mere retrospect will be a reward. Be not too anxious

about us. I have little doubt that the coming summer will open a more pleasing scene. Your mama is gone down to see Mrs. Tison, and Betsey is rocking George just behind my chair.

With respectful compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Gerry,

I remain, affectionately your father,

“JOS. P. PALMER.”

P.S. Remember to date your letters.

“BOSTON, 3rd of May, 1789.

“Sunday Evening.

“MY DEAR POLLY:

“We know not whether we have any letter from you by the last post or not.

“I thank you for your kind favor of the tenth inst. I would have written you more this evening if I had paper; but you will be convinced by your mamma's letter (in scraps) that we are very short of it; I enclose you her letter and beg you to keep up a good heart. Do not, my dear girl, suffer your spirits to be depressed. I have such firm trust in a superintending Providence, that I do not doubt but all these distresses will eventually work for our good. Dr. Crosby's death and his lady's affects me severely. I think the Crosby family is now extinct. My best regards to your kind doctor

and tell him I feel grateful sentiments towards him, for his attention to you. With most affectionate regards, and compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Gerry, I bid you adieu! Betsey, Hampden, Amelia and Sophia send much love

“JOS. P. PALMER.”

BOSTON, July 12th, 1789.

“MY DEAR POLLY:

“It gives me great pleasure to hear from you so often. I wish it was in my power to write you more frequently, but my avocations are of that kind, as unfit me for almost every kind of conversation. You will esteem it a very great happiness that you have a mama, who amply supplies this defect.

“I have heretofore told you that I very much approved of your style in writing because it appeared natural. I have lately been a little apprehensive that you deviate from that simplicity which is so peculiarly pleasing to me. Imitation is a noted characteristic of human nature, we are very apt to catch expressions of those we converse with, especially if we feel a partiality for them. 'Tis the same, as it regards books. There are few persons, I believe, (if they would speak the real truth) but must acknowledge, they feel a very sensible pleasure in reading a well wrote novel and why? Be-

cause the scenes of life, in which we all wish to act a part, are those painted in the most striking colors. The passions, which are the source of our greatest happiness or misery, are there exhibited in the strongest point of view. I am far from feeling that severity against novels which many express, for it has appeared to me, in all that ever I read, that the aim of the author was to contrast virtue and vice, to represent virtue as amiable as an angel and vice as hideous as its father. Notwithstanding this, there is danger of catching the language, the expressions are too strong for common parlance, as much so as the scenes represented are more happy or miserable than any that ever were, or can be realized in this life. By accustoming yourself to that kind of expression, you will, by and by, find yourself puzzled to make a distinction in your address to a common acquaintance and an intimate friend. I dare say you have noticed some persons who have accosted a transient gentleman or lady with epithets of such tenderness as ought to be saved to the near and dear connection and heard them afterwards express themselves about them in the most flighty terms. But my greatest objection to a free use of those strong expressions is, that it has a natural tendency to destroy, in your sex, the most lovely trait that you can ever boast. I mean amiability.

“I have wrote considerable, for me. My lovely girl must ever view what I write as fruit placed before

her for her choice; if she does not like it, throw it aside.

“Your most affectionate

“JOS. P. PALMER.¹

“P.S. Pray Mrs. and Mr. Gerry to accept my most sincere regards.”

¹ The last letter from Joseph Pearse Palmer, perhaps the most interesting of those sent to “Polly” in New York, is not included in the “Memoir” but preserved among the Tyler papers.

CHAPTER V

YOUTH IN THE COUNTRY (1790-1792)

Removal from Boston to Framingham. Life on the farm—toilers and spinners—the seven children—pleasures of the countryside—education of the youngsters—country customs. Amelia's journey to West Point. Royall Tyler's visit and invitation to Joseph Pearse Palmer. Little George's burn. Neglected training of Sophia. Mary's visit to Uncle Ephraim Hunt at New Lebanon—the drive with him from Framingham—Uncle's wife—pleasures of primitive society—visit to Quakers—the swim in the pool—Uncle's family and boarding house—élite at the Springs—unexpected arrival of Royall Tyler—affectionate greeting—his kindness—visit to Dutch farm house on North River—other happenings—return to Framingham.

WITHIN a year of Mary's return from New York came the great migration of the Palmers. In 1790, the unfortunate family abandoned willingly the town-life of Boston, with its intolerable shifts and changes, for the simple existence of the country at Framingham, only a day's walk away, but a whole world apart from Beacon St. and Cornhill. Nor could the primitive farmhouse of the Hunts, which remained for seven years the Palmer home, recall, save by vivid contrast, the vanished delights of the well-loved mansion at Germantown. In Mary's pages the new daily round shapes itself clearly:

“Soon after the death of his mother and removal of his sisters, my beloved father’s spirits sank, he seemed totally discouraged, and it so happened that my Uncle Samuel and Uncle William, who had befriended us in every way that they could, through all the distressing vicissitudes which befell us, happened to have a small farm fall into their hands (at Framingham, about twenty miles from Boston)¹ for an old debt and they told my father they would stock it and let him live there paying them half the proceeds. This he eagerly agreed to do and we were all heartily rejoiced to leave Boston. It would be only harrowing up your feelings to no purpose to tell you all the distress and privations we endured after your dear, blessed father left town and ceased to let us see him, we never knew why, but no doubt from pecuniary embarrassments which disabled him from assisting us, and he could not endure to witness trouble he could not relieve. Hereafter, when I come to speak more particularly of our own lives and history, I may say more on this subject. Now we will go on with our story.

¹ Temple in his *History of Framingham*, 1887, pp. 306-307, notes that Joseph Pearse Palmer removed to Framingham in 1789 (1790) leasing the farm owned by William and Samuel Hunt (now the Nat Hardy place), that he taught a school, and kept a tavern, established by John and William Hunt; that he removed in 1795 to Woodstock, Vt., and died there, June, 1797; and that his wife, Elizabeth Hunt, remained in Framingham that her children might have the advantage of the new academy till the winter of 1797-8 when she removed to Watertown. M. P. T. makes no mention of the tavern-keeping.

“We immediately prepared for our removal. Uncle William sent his team from Watertown to help us in the meantime. They had put five cows and a number of sheep upon the farm. We found the house dirty and dilapidated enough, but we were heartily rejoiced to get into the country, and willing to work with our hands so that our hearts might be relieved from the thousand mortifications we had so long endured. The cows I soon learned to milk; Betsey, after a little while, did so also, but was more timid about it at first. My father taught us, he felt now the good effects of his early education at Germantown. I was fifteen, Betsey thirteen, then there were Hampden, Edward, Amelia, Sophia and George, a large family. Our uncles generously furnished us with immediate necessities and how the dear children rejoiced in plenty of bread and milk! Mother took care of the milk and very soon learned from our kind neighbors the art of making butter and cheese; we girls assisting in the laborious part, keeping churn, pans, cheese-hoops and strainers nice and sweet. But with all this we had not been so happy for many days as we were then. I fear our father did not enjoy his part of the business so well. It had been many years since he had labored with his hands, and now he was called to do double duty; his boys were not old enough to do much, only eight and ten years, so father, in order to get the work done, had to change work, as it was called, and go and hoe corn and rake

hay for his neighbors to pay for ploughing and mowing and so forth on our land. It was impossible for him to hire help, but in this way we got along as well as possible under such circumstances. In the winter, the farmers found my father's superior knowledge of figures as useful to them as their labor was to him in summer, and he frequently paid them for sledding wood by adjusting their account books, astonishing them by bringing order out of 'confusion worse confounded.' In this, and various other ways we lived along.

"We learned to spin, borrowing wheels of our good-natured neighbors, who seemed pleased to teach the city ladies their craft. We learned, while we lived there, to spin flax, on a little foot wheel, and wool, tow and cotton, on a large wheel. There was a plump rosy faced girl whose name was Zerniah Price, who was one of our nearest neighbors and who seemed to take great interest in teaching us. She taught us how to card wool, cotton and tow, and how to hatchel flax, some of which was raised upon the farm; and my mother would change work with Zerniah's mother and other women, knitting and sewing for them while they would weave cotton and flax into cloth which we would get dressed into fustian at the mill for the boys and also for Father's summer working dress. We also had the wool we spun woven and dressed at the clothing mill for their winter everyday. In this way our working hours passed rapidly and for recreation there were the fields

and woods, and never did a caged bird enjoy recovered liberty more than did we children from the oldest to the youngest that first summer, especially after being caged for a year in a small house in an alley which led from Cornhill into Brattle Sq., where we could see no objects more amusing than brick walls. But here were green fields, and berries of various kinds in their seasons. There was one field on the farm, rather swampy, where grew the high blue-berries in great abundance. The bushes were higher than my head, and the fruit hung in delicious luxuriance from the boughs. It was my task to pull them down so the little boys could pick and fill the baskets, while Betsey sat on a dry place holding George, who was then just old enough to run into the swamp if not restrained; sometimes we would exchange employment and she would help the boys while I sat and tended baby. In these excursions, we seldom went without a book which was rather an annoyance to poor George, but a great treat to us, as our time was so entirely taken up by our various avocations as to leave us little leisure for reading; especially during the long summer days, we were wanted early in the morning to milk the cows, so that they might go to pasture in season; and of course we must go early to bed.

“My mother had always been accustomed, especially while nursing, to have a bowl of chocolate carried to her while in bed in the morning, and my father was in distress if she was neglected in any way. It took years

to wean him from the idea that we must be ladies, although he knew that we must give up all such pretensions; however, we tried as much as possible to have our mother saved every possible privation as much for his sake as for hers. He would do everything he could to help us, and taught his boys to save us steps and as much labor as possible, always scolding them if they stood by and saw us lift a pail of water or put wood on the fire or do anything that they could do. And after we had the chocolate made, he would carry it to Mother, if we did not watch our opportunity when he happened to be out, as, of course, he often had to be when all the outdoor work depended upon him, for which reason we tried to save him all we could. After George was weaned, mother insisted upon giving up this luxury and would rise and help get breakfast. As soon as the nights grew shorter, this was done and Master George was turned off to sleep with me, and mother began daily operations and made some fine butter and cheese that summer. The rest of the housework came upon us girls. And that was the reason why the afternoon rambles were such rich treats to us; every kind of berry was abundant in that town and the neighboring women used to gather quantities and rise by four o'clock or earlier in the morning, and either in light carts with one horse, or else with panniers loaded with the precious fruit, set out for Boston market. These good dames proved often a great convenience to us. There was no

post office nearer than two miles and a half from us, and, as they passed through Watertown, where my Grandmother Hunt and her two daughters and son William lived, we could write letters and send these by them and they sometimes brought answers, but not often, as they usually got home very late at night.

“Among other of her numerous avocations, my mother taught her children to read and write. Hampden, Edward, Amelia and Sophia were just old enough to be taught by her, and we girls, who were old enough to take care of household affairs, tried to let her have time for it; as there was no school kept in that town then, except in winter. Here we lived and enjoyed ourselves much for several years (and in this house was born my sister Catherine),¹ notwithstanding hard work and many privations, not only of what we had formerly thought necessities, but also of the pleasures and intercourse of society. Our neighbors were kind honest people, but there was no refinement or education among them, except what they acquired from three months' schooling, under the instructions of the cheapest masters that could be obtained in the midst of winter. And, after we had been there two or three years and our boys had got to be twelve and ten years old, my father, finding he had leisure during three months in winter, offered his services among our immediate neighbors to teach a private school for a few boys about the same

¹ Later Mrs. Henry Putnam.

age, and my mother took her carpet from her parlor and devoted the room to the school, and was amply paid in the gratification of her maternal pride in finding her boys so far excelling the others in their literary acquirements. At the close of the term we had an exhibition. Betsey had been one of the scholars, and was always a fine scholar, much better than I ever was; she shone conspicuous as a grammar scholar, and also in speaking pieces. Amelia also was one of the scholars, although she was not seven years old. The two boys spoke Brutus and Cassius with good emphasis and discretion and excited much applause. The minister of the parish attended, the lawyer and doctor also, so we had good judges, besides all the fathers and mothers, who seemed highly gratified with the improvement by their children. They all pleaded hard for another term, but my father had had enough of teaching. His health began to fail and his spirits also, but he persevered in every exertion, not knowing what better to do for his numerous family.

Our friends in Boston were very kind, frequently sending us trunks of clothing and material to be made over for the boys and little girls, and mother was always famous for her skill with the needle. All this kept us very busy. We visited sociably with the neighbors and I believe were on good terms with them all, but it was indispensable in these visits to stay to tea. Such a thing as our fashionable calls was not known, and,

whenever we saw one or two ladies coming in an afternoon, we were sure they meant to stay, and we were obliged to prepare something as nice as we could. There were no nice cooking stoves then, and such visits not unfrequently put us to serious trouble; such as baking short cakes at the fire or biscuits in a covered stew pan, a labor we know nothing about nowadays. Generally those who began to cultivate more genteel manners would send word in the morning when such an inroad was in contemplation. This habit we followed for our own selves, and, when we found a visit was due or expected, we were careful to send word early.

“The summer after the school in our house [1791] my father's sister Cranch [Elizabeth], who was now firmly and happily settled at West Point, and, despairing of having any family of her own, wrote a very pressing letter to my mother begging her and her brother to give her one of their little girls, and, as Amelia was the one she had seen before she left New England, she would prefer her. Amelia, who was a remarkable precocious child, was delighted at the prospect of going, and, although it was heart-rending almost, to give away the dear child in whom we all took so much pride, still we all thought it would be wrong to deprive her, of such a chance. We knew she would be well educated, for her aunts were in every way capable, even though there should be no schools near them; and the suggestion was

such a relief to her parents under all circumstances, that a letter was quickly despatched consenting gratefully to the request. But how to get the child such a distance alone! Her father could not leave his business or afford the expenses of a journey, and in the reply all this was made clear. They reported that there was a lady, a friend of theirs who lived in the city of New York, who said, if we would get Amelia to her house, she would undertake to see her conveyed safely to West Point, as there were packets constantly passing up the river every day. This lady was one who had been a particular friend of Mother's, a Miss Guild; she had married Mr. Robinson, a merchant in New York, and mother flattered herself she would be pleased to see one of her children and take all necessary care of her safety, but how to get the little thing to New York? That was a serious question. She wrote to her brother Sam [Samuel Hunt] in Boston. He was so much pleased at the idea of lessening the family that he exerted himself to find a person who would take charge of the child. He was fortunate enough to meet one of the young Perkinses, who, after receiving his share of his Uncle Hancock's property, had finished his medical education, which was begun with his father, and was now going to Cincinnati to take up his abode; he would pass through New York and would see the little girl safely to Mrs. Robinson. This was good news, but Dr. Perkins could not come our way, the stages went the Worcester road,

so Amelia must go to Boston. Uncle Sam invited her to his house.

"Aunt Cranch had begged us not to do anything about preparing her wardrobe, only decent for her journey. Accordingly, she had a bundle done up in a large handkerchief containing one change of linen, some stockings, pocket-handkerchiefs, one frock and cotton shirt for change in case of accident. This bundle Uncle was requested to ask Dr. Perkins to put in his trunk until he reached New York. Mother wrote a long letter to Mrs. Robinson, explaining all circumstances and leaving Amelia to her care, to convey to West Point as Mrs. Cranch had directed. Now it only remained to get her conveyed twenty miles to Boston. This was a difficulty. But Amelia herself thought of a way! 'Why Mama, I can ride down in Mrs. Rice's market cart, you know she goes twice a week, and I know she will let me.' This was dreadful in Mother's eyes. She must start this season of the year, by one o'clock in the morning, and ride all night on a hard seat, so as to get into town soon after sunrise that the butter might be nice; it would kill the poor thing! Not so, thought the courageous child, and so, Father consenting, mother went to see Mrs. Rice. She was quite willing, would like her company, and, if she could not keep awake, would try to fix a place on the straw in the cart for her to lie down and sleep. Thus it was settled, and, with many cautions to take care of her bundle, in which

were the important letters to Mrs. Robinson and Aunt Cranch, besides a note to Uncle Sam thanking him for his kindness (he was to pay her way to New York, Mother would repay him by knitting him some stockings and so forth), our dear little seven-year-old child thus started on her long perilous journey, among entire strangers. Mrs. Rice appeared late in the evening and said they had had a pleasant ride. Amelia had behaved like a woman and enjoyed it very much.

“It was some time before we heard from her and Mother began to be quite miserable about it, blaming herself for consenting to her going; but at length came a letter from Mrs. Robinson in New York telling of her safe arrival at her house and promising to send her on to West Point the first chance that came, but not knowing of any at present. Here was another trouble for Mother. How could the child stay long in the city with so scant a wardrobe? After some weeks came a letter from Aunt Cranch which made us all glad, although Mother, who perfectly understood the luxury of tears, had a hearty cry over it. It seems Mrs. Robinson kept Amelia nearly three weeks in the city before they found a chance to send her on, and then put her alone, with her little bundle, on board a lighter going by there, only two men on board, who, when they got to the landing, put her on shore, gave her her bundle and told her to follow that road and she would find her way; and thus left her just before sundown to find her

uncle's all alone. She said this was the first time her heart had failed her since she left home and she could not help crying, but pushed on up a steep hilly road rough with loose stones some way, before she saw any sign of a dwelling house. At last she came to a fence and through the rails she could see a house, still she saw no end of the fence and no gate; she began to cry in earnest for it was growing dark. Aunt Cranch happened out about her door and, to her astonishment, heard a child crying, for at that day their house was the only one, and not a child on the place. She quickly gave the alarm and had several soldiers searching for the little sufferer, and soon she was clasped to the maternal bosom of her who ever after was a real mother to her.

“Here she lived till Mr. Cranch's health failed and he was obliged to resign his post and return to Massachusetts, where Aunt opened a school, taking Amelia in as a teacher; she then was between fourteen and fifteen. They first lived on Milton Hill, as it was then called. After a few years, Uncle grew very feeble, and, for some reason which I do not remember, they removed to Jamaica Plains and there carried on a prosperous school. Amelia, who was a very lively engaging girl, had many suitors during this time and at Milton a Mr. Ford was very persevering and she rather favored his suit; but he was a card-maker by trade, and her adopted parents were much opposed and finally succeeded in breaking up the acquaintance; perhaps this was one reason why

they left Milton, but I am not sure. Here Uncle Cranch died and Aunt and Amelia removed to Salem, where my sisters then lived, but more of this hereafter.¹

“It is time to see what was the condition of the family at Framingham. That summer [1791] we were electrified by a visit from your father.² We had not seen him for several years, never since his visit in New York and subsequent retreat with his mother. He was joyfully welcomed by my father and mother, to say nothing of anyone else. He professed to me that he was going to Vermont, then considered the outskirts of creation by many, and where all the rogues and runaways congregated, and for that reason considered a good place for lawyers. The state had covered herself with glory in her late struggle with New York and New Hampshire and was beginning to show herself amply capable of self-government since coming into the confederacy. Here he was bent upon starting anew in life, leaving his mother in the care of his brother John, and relinquishing the Boston property for her use and support. He tarried with us one night; he had come on horseback and intended prosecuting his journey that way. There were at that time no stage coaches to Vermont. He learned from my father the state of his affairs and strongly urged him to attempt something more con-

¹ Amelia married Abel Curtis, teacher, of Salem, where lived her sisters Elizabeth (Mrs. Nathaniel Peabody) and Sophia (Mrs. Thomas Pickman).

² Royall Tyler.

genial than hoeing corn. But what? This was a difficult question for one who had no capital, was advanced in years, and had a large family depending upon him. Finally Mr. Tyler told him that he was on his way to Windsor, Vt., where he expected to find the Supreme Court in session, and he would make inquiry. He thought it possible that in a new country a man of education might find employment as a teacher, which would be far better than his present situation. This afforded a gleam of hope, and we all urged my father to consent to go, if such a chance offered. Mr. Tyler said he would visit us in the winter, if anything favorable occurred, and would take him out with him on his return. And so he left us. Soon after he wrote saying he thought the prospect favorable in Windsor and Woodstock, and would write again. Then mother thought it right to consult her brothers. Uncle Sam came to see us, and, after hearing and seeing all the circumstances and my father's health, thought well of the project; especially after consulting us all and finding we were willing to run all risks and make all exertions to get along, in order that my father might have a chance of recovering his health and spirits. Mother said she had no doubt our neighbors would cultivate our fields and secure our hay and fruit (we had some fine apples) for a reasonable share and leave perhaps as much for us as we realized under the present method. It was therefore decided that we should try awhile, and

see how we succeeded, and my father answered Mr. Tyler accordingly; and then the next thing was to prepare my father's wardrobe for so long an absence, and, by the kind assistance of friends and much exertion, we succeeded pretty well. It was a great comfort to see how the sight of his old friend and a little glimmering of hope revived my dear father's spirits; his work this summer seemed much lighter to him.

"Occasional letters from Mr. Tyler to my father, giving good accounts of his success in his profession among the Green Mountains and reporting that he wanted him to be prepared to go to the friends he had mentioned before, who were depending upon him as a tutor in two or three families, kept up our spirits. He said he should come for him the first good sleighing if possible. He also said that, if it was pleasing to them, he would take Hampden into his office when he was old enough to study law. All this was comforting, but it did not take place as soon as we hoped. Mr. Tyler did not come that winter, something prevented, and we had the prospect of living another year at least, as we had so long done, and the things we had purchased for my father were laid by until some chance offered for him to go.

"A sad accident happened to poor George which tried us all very much, and which I shall record as a warning to all boys to be careful under like circumstances. George must have been between five and six years old

when, one morning, mother rose pretty early to prepare breakfast and found all the fire gone out; our custom then was to rake up the fire carefully at night under the ashes so as to preserve it in case of sickness in the night or convenience for kindling the fire in the morning; but unfortunately it had all gone out this morning, Lucifer matches were not yet invented, and, to save herself the trouble of striking fire in a tinder-box, she awoke little George, gave him a pair of small light tongs and bid him run to the next neighbor's house in sight, and get a coal of fire. He was a smart little boy and ran off willingly. We thought he was gone very long, but presently I, who was upstairs, heard him screaming terribly. I called Mother, she answered, "He has stubbed his toe, no doubt, he always cries if he hurts himself at all." But I ran to the window where I could see the road he went, and there the poor child was running smoking along, as if all on fire. We then all ran to him, Mother first and then Betsey and I. Mother wrapped her clothes around him, and smothered the flame, but he was dreadfully burnt. He was dressed in a suit of the fustian we had made, the jacket and pantaloons were joined together as the fashion was for such little boys, and, when he came out of the house where he had been, and got a fine lively coal in his little tongs, the sun, as usual, made it appear to the child as if it was gone out, and he lifted up the tongs to blow it and keep it alive

as he thought; the action broke the coal and half of it fell into his bosom and lodged near his hip. Childlike he ran and screamed, throwing away the tongs and fire. All the time we heard the poor child scream, the fire was kindling his cotton clothes and burning him dreadfully. When Mother reached him, they were blazing; he was burnt in a shocking manner, all between his legs and round his hip. Mother tore off the blazing clothes, and with them a large piece of flesh, probably less haste would have been wiser, but what could a mother do but try to save his life before he inhaled the flame, and this was her first thought?

“We were between two and three miles from a physician and we could think of nothing but easing his anguish by applying the various remedies prescribed by our kind neighbors; nothing felt so good to him as cold Indian meal and water poultices, which we applied, changing them as fast as they grew warm till the doctor came. He did not object to what we had done, and it is so long since that I forget his prescriptions, but the poor child screamed day and night, and would draw up his legs in such a way that force was necessary, when the wounds were dressed, to make him stretch them out. The weather was extremely warm, and the wounds were so offensive the doctor dreaded mortification, but after a fortnight he would permit Mother to lay him upon the bed at times, and take a little rest herself. Before that she held him most of

the time, he was unwilling anyone should relieve her for an hour's sleep. I made a resolution then, which I believe I always kept, never to indulge a child, let it be ever so ill, to such an unreasonable extent. It was much more comfortable for him to lie, or to be bolstered upon a bed, than to sit in Mother's lap all the time, and he recovered much faster. It almost killed his mother, she could not eat or sleep, for if, from extreme fatigue of holding him, she would insist on letting one of us take him, or putting him upon the bed, he would scream all the time, so that as soon as she could take the air a moment or refresh herself a little, she would sit in her great chair with her feet on a chair or a cricket high enough to make a bed of her lap, with pillows, and sit and hold him till she almost fainted. My father protested, but she thought us all unfeeling if we said a word, and, in truth, the poor child was a great sufferer. He was lame many weeks and we found then, what everyone realizes at some time, how wrong it is to think our lot hard, when our health is mercifully spared to us. It added much to our task having our mother taken entirely away from all family affairs. But our boys were good to help us and we got along pretty well. We, Betsey and I, took turns, week about, to do the work, while the other waited upon mother and helped tend upon George, which was much the hardest task.

"We heard from West Point occasionally that Amelia was very happy. Sophia grew to be a very lovely

child, but she was peculiar. She was always my pet, and we used to try to make her learn all we could; her mind was remarkably precocious, but in a way all her own. She thought a great deal, and, if she had had an Aunt Amelia¹ to teach her then, she would have been as wise as lovely, but we, Betsey and I, had not been properly taught ourselves, and our parents, ever after she was born, had been so harassed with trials and afflictions they could not train their little ones as they wished to, and so Sophia had a vocabulary of her own, which was very new and amusing while she was little, but caused her some trouble to rectify as she grew up. Nevertheless, she was always the darling of the house and especially of her father who always protested she was the most sensible of the family, although we almost despaired of her ever learning to read or write. In her infant wisdom she thought this altogether an unnecessary piece of labor, and she continued of that opinion until after she came to Vermont to live with me.

The next winter (1791-1792), although we were much disappointed at not seeing our friend from Vermont, another friend visited us whom we children had never seen and our parents not for many years, my mother's brother Ephraim. As I have said before, he married immediately after the peace and settled near West Point, where he had some military office awhile, and

¹ Madam Tyler's daughter Amelia, "the teacher of three generations" of Brattleboro children.

then opened a store somewhere on North River. Afterwards he removed to New Lebanon [in New York], where he was still in mercantile business. Whether Mother wrote to him about our family troubles or he was only moved by a desire to see his friends after so long an absence, I never knew or have forgotten. At all events, he was very urgent with my parents to let me go home with him and spend a year, promising to bring me home the first sleighing next winter. My heart rebelled awhile, I was so fearful of being absent when your father should come. But on the other hand, it was a great temptation to get away from toil and sorrow awhile, especially as mother was very earnest to have me go, and my father was still in doubt about the Vermont business, and was fearful something might occur to prevent the plan, or some new misfortune might develop. My uncle was a very handsome, pleasant man, and was not to be denied; he overruled all my scruples as to wardrobe and so forth, said he had a store full of goods at home, and, if I wanted anything, his wife would see to that, so it was finally decided that I should go. Uncle also offered to take Edward, my brother, with us and let him try how he liked mercantile business; if it suited him, he might stay with him. If not, or if he proved in any way unsatisfactory, he should return with me.

“Accordingly, after Uncle had made his visit to his mother, brothers and sisters, at Watertown and Bos-

ton, he came for us, and we set off. He had a fine span of horses and a splendid sleigh, and the roads were excellent, just snow enough to make fine sleighing. I was nearly seventeen, emancipated, as it were, from a life of anxiety and labor, with a prospect of a pleasant sojourn with friends whom I had always been taught to love, although as yet strangers; it is not to be wondered if my spirits, naturally buoyant, were greatly excited, and, could I have forgotten the destitution and sorrows of my home and the dear ones there, I should have been perfectly happy. Dear Edward also enjoyed the change equally with myself, but he was constitutionally quiet and reserved, and too young to realize as I did the great change. Our uncle was sociable and kind, and seemed delighted with my prattle. It is long since and I do not recall what I said, but I suppose I amused him with descriptions of persons and events new to him. I only remember his hearty laughs, and frequent regrets that he had not sooner become acquainted with us all. Our journey was rapid and the third day we arrived in Lebanon.

“Uncle pointed out to us the smoking stream of water which flowed down the hill opposite us as we entered the village, issuing from the warm springs, and also a large house which stood above the springs. This was his dwelling. He also showed us the village of Shaking Quakers, and, as we passed through, also nearer home, his store, a humble building, not to be

compared with the village shops of these days. We found his wife and children waiting in the hall to receive us. She welcomed me most affectionately, and her kind and sweet manners soon counteracted the first appearance made. She struck me as being very plain indeed, but I soon grew to think her face almost beautiful; such was the power of her sweet benevolent spirit over the physical conformation of her countenance, that it was a real pleasure to look at her. I certainly never loved anyone out of my own family so well as I did her. Her dress, when she met her husband after three or four weeks' absence, was such as no Irish girl in any of our kitchens would be seen in of an afternoon. It consisted of a black rustle skirt and a calico short gown and apron, with a muslin handkerchief crossed over her bosom and pinned perfectly plain, a cap of lace upon her head, such as were worn then by all ladies, young and old, made with a high crown and narrow fore part, and a ruffle plaited around the face, a most unbecoming dress to her; but all this was overlooked when you became acquainted with her and learned to read her soft black eyes, the redeeming feature of her face, and listen to her uniformly kind conversation. She did all and more for me than Uncle promised. He had told me on the journey that she would make me wear a cap, as all the girls of my age did, and, sure enough, she gave me some lace the day after I got there, and a cap to pattern after, and said, 'I suppose you

can make yourself some caps, we all have to do such things for ourselves here.' I was horrified, as I had never cut and made a cap, and my mother had then never worn one since I was grown up, always dressing her own beautiful hair. But Aunt would not hear of any excuses, so I was too proud to own, or rather persist in, my ignorance, and, with a little direction from her, I made out quite smartly and soon sported as high a headdress as anybody.

"The young people soon began to call upon me, and I became the belle among them, thanks to my good aunt, who gave me everything I wanted to appear as well as any of them. Sleigh-rides and little domestic parties were frequent, and they did everything they could to make me contented and happy. There were two young gentlemen in the circle in which Uncle's family moved, one a clerk in a store and the other the schoolmaster. Their respective vocations prevented their having much time to devote to the ladies, but they were intelligent, well-behaved young men, and did all they could to make themselves useful and agreeable. You will have some idea of the state of society there then, when I tell you that sanded floors, nicely stroked, were the fashion, and all the furniture corresponded. Aunt had not a sofa or a rocking-chair, such as now adorn almost every farmer's or mechanic's parlor, no curtains to bed or window, nor a carpet in her house, and in these matters the home I had left far surpassed hers, or that of

any of the friends she visited. Such things had not made their way into the country community, especially up among the mountains where we were, but their tables groaned with every product of the country, and on special occasions with luxuries from abroad, and my heart ached, when seated at Aunt's plentiful board, to think how differently my own dear friends at home were probably faring, so that I was often accused of home-sickness when far different emotions were filling my eyes with tears. Whenever I was thus overtaken, Aunt would promptly plan some excursion or party to amuse me. The country around the springs was magnificent; the road between New Lebanon and Pittsfield was over a mountain two miles in ascent before we came to the top. In every direction we were treated with glorious scenery, let us ride which way we pleased, and, as Uncle had a fine span of horses and a man to drive them at our command, we often improved our opportunity.

"Aunt took me to see the Quaker village. Once we went to their place of worship, which made me really sad, to see human creatures, men and women, so deluded as to think the Infinite Creator could be pleased with such fantastic gesticulations; they were hopping and turning around, first one way, then the other, till physically exhausted and obliged to sit down; all the time humming a monotonous tune, doleful to hear. One day in a week's time, Aunt wanted to buy some yarn

to knit of the Shaker women, so the sleigh was tackled and we went to the village, about two miles off. While Aunt was busy about her yarn, I observed a young man who hid behind a door and would peek out at me like a child playing bo-peep, and then dodge back, looking idiotic in the extreme. I said nothing while there, but when we left the house, I told Aunt about it, and asked her if she knew anything about him. She did not but she said, 'I am going now a few miles further to see an old lady who once lived among this people. She may know, we will ask her.' Accordingly, we drove on to a farmer's where Aunt expected to find some nice butter and eggs. She did so, and, being hospitably invited to sit by a fine fire in a very nice kitchen, they entered into conversation, and Aunt contrived to refer to the poor idiotic young man at the Shaker house. 'Oh, dear,' said the old lady, 'poor thing! It is a sad story. He was a bright boy but, losing his parents, these people took him and made much of him; he grew up, and everyone thought would make a smart, active man. But, Ma'am, you know their notions, they keep the young women in one house and the boys in another, and, if they get together, they are awfully punished; well, it so happened that a pretty young girl lived directly across the way from where this poor fellow lived, and somehow or other they got acquainted and loved each other desperately. At last they were found out and shut up; what became of the girl I do not know, but they tor-

mented the boy till he lost his wits, and now he is a natural fool! They would be glad to undo their work now, but cannot, but must support him, as he is not capable of doing anything!' Many of the cruelties she related I dare not repeat; we went home, sad and horror stricken, and I shall never lose the recollection of the face that kept peeking at me from behind the door.

"The Springs, so wonderful, were a constant source of amusement to us young people. There were two or three young girls with whom I became intimate, who frequently came to call socially, and, as it was but a few steps from our house to the shanty which was built over the rock (from which the warm water bubbled up from innumerable little holes like honey-comb) and at that early day constituted the only shelter for bathers, we used frequently to treat ourselves to the luxury of a warm bath. There were two apartments in the shanty, one for ladies, the other for gentlemen, with rough board benches to lay our garments upon surrounding the platform; from this we descended an almost perpendicular flight of steps into a large vat, into which the water from the spring was conducted, and, after filling it deep enough to allow such as wished to swim about, disgorged itself, by an aperture for the purpose. Several of my companions, having been accustomed to it, would swim like mermaids, but I was satisfied with descending the steps for my bath. This drew upon me shouts of ridicule for my cowardice. The swimmers

would dive off the platform and, after sporting around like a bevy of boys, skip up the stairs and dress themselves, telling me I was foolish not to share so great a luxury. I stood all this for some months till the weather became warm and I grew more accustomed to the water, but, one unlucky day, four of us went to bathe, when, by dint of ridicule and persuasion, I was induced to take the fearful plunge. The floor of the tub was very slippery and I could not keep my footing but tumbled and splashed about at a great rate. I verily expected to be drowned; at times I made a desperate effort to seize hold of something, but all I touched was slippery with the incipient vegetation caused by long submersion in warm water; at length, to my great joy, I heard one of my companions exclaim, 'Only see! Polly is drowning, I am afraid!' They were dressing, but one, whom I dearly loved, flung off her clothes, and, jumping down, caught me in her arms and directed me to the steps. I really believe in a few moments more I should have lost my senses; I had all the terror of drowning except that I had a hope that some of them would come to my assistance. I never again attempted to swim. This is a long story, but it was acted in a very few moments.

"When the season for company at the Springs drew nigh, Uncle decided to move into a larger house, intending to take boarders. At that time there were but few dwellings fit to accommodate company in the vil-

lage, and it so happened that the best one there had been used the whole winter as a hospital for small-pox patients. These were all cured and gone home, but, although all in Uncle's family were free from danger, it was proper to consider the others, so the house had to be fumigated, cleansed and white-washed from garret to cellar. No paper had ever encumbered the walls, or could now, as there was no such thing known in that village. Aunt was much engaged for some weeks in superintending these labors. I find, by looking back, I have not described your uncle's children. His eldest daughter, Cornelia, was a bright brunette, with black eyes like her mother. There was nothing remarkable about her, and was but eight years old when I went there. She had two brothers, Daniel the elder child, named for his grandfather, and Henry, a blue-eyed boy like his father. After him came Eliza, who also bid fair to be the prettiest, having her mother's beautiful dark eyes, combined with her father's fair complexion. It is strange that I have never heard anything of them since I came to Vermont. My uncle died soon after, and that is the last I ever heard from the family. As soon as the house was ready, we had a famous time moving, but, as it was not far, and we made good use of the boys, that job was soon over. Aunt was not unlike Mrs. Sarah Tyler,¹ tall, active and energetic, with a mild and amiable temper. She was a host in

¹ Her daughter-in-law, Sarah Boardman Tyler, widow of Edward R. T.

herself. Uncle was very much disposed to leave all family affairs to her control, his business in the store occupying most of his time.

“About June, strangers began to visit the Springs, which were growing famous for the cure of cutaneous diseases and rheumatism. But, as is usual, many came simply for amusement and Uncle’s house was soon filled with the élite of those who were in search of recreation among the beautiful scenes already famous in Berkshire and in the neighboring counties of New York. I recollect a few celebrated names among our household that summer. There was Mrs. Montgomery,¹ widow of the celebrated officer General Montgomery, so unfortunately slain at the siege of Quebec. Her appearance was singular, since, as it was then reported, she had almost lost the use of her eyes by excessive weeping for her husband. Her eyes appeared like those of a person who (as the phrase is) has wept her eyes out, and she could not lift her eyelids to look a person in the face;—it was distressing to see her. She was accompanied by a very lovely Quaker lady whose name I have forgotten. Gen. Hamilton² and a gay party with him were there, among whom was a Miss

¹ Mrs. Montgomery was living thirty-three years later, for Gen. Lafayette paid his respects to her and Mrs. Alexander Hamilton in New York in 1825.

² Gen. Hamilton, who is mentioned here in close connection with “a family from Antigua,” is probably the British officer, Henry Hamilton, who fought through the Revolution, was later Governor of Bermuda and died at Antigua in 1796.

Provoost, daughter of Bishop Provoost,¹ to whom he was very much devoted. It was said he sought her in marriage, but I never heard how his suit sped. There was also an English family passed some weeks there, Mr. Kirby, his wife, two children and his wife's mother, who was reported (by their domestics) to be immensely rich; they came from Antigua, and had several creole women-servants, besides black men in abundance. They set a bright example to the household, by bringing all their servants every morning into their room to prayers, read by Mr. Kirby, and every Sunday they were called to join in the whole Episcopal service when he also read a sermon. I used to want to join them, but was afraid to ask. Mr. Kirby and lady were evidently well-educated, really genteel people, but the mother was a singular specimen of mortality. She was immensely corpulent, and dressed always in white muslin loose dresses on account of the heat which she swore was more intense than in Antigua. Her common language was more profane than that of any person I ever had the misfortune to live with (except one gentleman from South Carolina who boarded with my father in Boston). Yet she wished to appear, and perhaps was, pious in her way; but the awful manner in which she would use the sacred names of Deity, especially Our Saviour's, made me tremble, and shocks me even now to

¹ Bishop Samuel Provoost, first P. E. bishop of New York and a famous figure in the church at the time of the Revolution.

recollect; all from a vile habit she had acquired from abusing her slaves. As I understood, the property chiefly came through her, and she expected, and as far as she could, exacted, implicit obedience from all the family. She could not have realized the omnipresence of God, or she would not have called His holy name on every trifling occasion as she did!

“There was quite a long table full of guests, and one day I was surprised into a childish exhibition of feeling, which I fain would leave out of this narrative, but Amelia insists upon its being told. It was customary for me to sit at the head of the table near my aunt, that I might assist her if needed. From my seat I could see the front gate of the house, although the table stood in such a direction that I was obliged to pass the whole company to reach the front door if anyone entered. This memorable day, I happened to look towards the front gate and saw one pass whom I had always been accustomed to meet with open arms from infancy. It was your father! It had been more than a year, nearly two, since I had heard anything from him or knew where he was, and the sight of him so surprised and delighted me that, forgetting all else, I sprang from my seat, ran into the hall where by that time he had entered, and he, opening his arms as when I was a child, I threw mine round his neck and received his old-fashioned embrace. ‘My dear child!’ said he. ‘Oh, Mr. Tyler, how glad I am to see you,’ said I. By this

time we had passed through the hall into a long piazza which ran the whole length of the house, where we sat down on the benches directly under the dining-room windows, and had a long talk, during which I learned that he had been very busy since he was at our house, and had met with some disappointments, and, now being on a visit to Mr. Sedgwick,¹ he happened to hear I was in the neighborhood and came on purpose to see me. 'But, my child, how you have grown since I saw you last, I should scarcely know you,' and then followed some customary compliments too trifling to record. Finally, he told me he thought the prospect for my father as a tutor brighter. I ought to have urged him, perhaps, to hasten any plans or opening for my father, but I felt delicate about it, thinking of all he had done in times past; I could only say I hoped something would turn up, for my father's spirits were greatly depressed and his health not good.

"Hearing the company rising from the table, he took his leave, promising to call again before he left for home in Vermont. He did call the next day, but the house was full of company and he only stayed a few moments. I followed him to the door, where he put a small package in my hand saying, 'In memory of Auld Lang Syne,' and was gone! I felt very desolate when he was gone. Although hitherto he had ever treated me like a child, as I had been, yet in my heart I loved

¹ Judge Theodore Sedgwick of Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

him better than I ever did any other, and was more doubtful whether he felt any more for me than he would have done for a young sister. His package contained white muslin for a dress. Uncle and Aunt thought it strange he should make me such a present, and I was obliged to detail his long and intimate acquaintance with my father, and the scenes of distress and sorrow in which he had been our friend and benefactor. It was some time before they could be quite pleased with me for welcoming him in such an extraordinary manner, greatly to their mortification, and to the amusement of the company at table (of which, in truth, I myself felt ashamed); but, after they heard all, and how I had been his pet for so many years, they forgave me, and Uncle said, 'I have before heard of Royall Tyler as a very gay young man and author of a play I very much delight in, *The Contrast*.' I afterwards found out it was the only thing Uncle had read except the newspapers, and he found the Yankee character, Jonathan, its great charm. Uncle had no taste for reading; his heart was all in his business, but in the evenings, after that visit, he seldom sat down with us, without bringing out *The Contrast*, of which he had a printed copy, reading it aloud, till his wife would almost scold, saying she should know it all by heart.

"While in New Lebanon, I had visited Aunt's friends at Coxsackie on the North River. Her father, Mr. Jerboss, alias, or English, Mr. Bush, was a wealthy

farmer, a genuine Dutchman, and all his servants were slaves. One, an old woman, had nursed my aunt, and she seemed to love her quite as well as her own mother. She always called her Mammy Mooney. Their house looked as if it had been built centuries ago. It seemed to consist of a very long kitchen in which the family lived. I saw no other room when we called, though there might have been others; there was a great fireplace which extended, I should think, a third part of one side of the immense kitchen. In one corner of this room stood a barrel, which looked like a cider barrel, with one head taken out, standing upon the other. This was filled with what they called sweet buttermilk, of which they are very fond. It was the produce of the barrel churn, into which the milk of several cows was strained every night and morning, and was immediately churned by a stout black man. The butter thus made from sweet milk right from the cows was the most delicious I ever tasted, and those good people could not believe that decent butter could be made in the English fashion of setting it in pans, and often having the cream sour before churning. The buttermilk is considered a great luxury, and it was with some difficulty I excused myself from drinking a cup of it. Managing in this way, they never use any milk fresh, or make any cheese, except what we know as Dutch cheese, which is made from the buttermilk after it becomes too sour to drink, and then the barrel is replenished from the

churn. I saw the churn which stood in the kitchen, and was really a barrel churn, not the little miniature thing we designate by that name, although hung in like manner. In another corner of the same room stood another barrel devoted to another luxury, sauerkraut. My aunt asked me if I ever ate any. I told her no. She asked if I wished to taste it. I declined and, after we came away, she told me the process by which it was made, and I was glad I had declined.

“Aunt had a sister, Miss Mary Bush, who spent some time with us while I was there. She was a very good girl, but not equal to her sister in my eyes; she had blue eyes and a fair complexion. Everything was exquisitely clean about the room we were in and perhaps there may have been a parlor and so forth. But the old gentleman and lady seemed to be at home in the spacious kitchen and urged our making a longer visit, but Uncle declined on account of other engagements. We crossed the Hudson, I think at Kinder Hook, and were anxious to recross before a thunder storm evidently gathering should impede our passage. We did but just escape; we got over safely, but the wind blew and the waves rolled awfully for such a young traveler as myself, and Uncle laughed at my fears. This was the only time I accompanied them, not being desirous of repeating the visit, or crossing the Hudson in a ferryboat, where the horses looked almost as afraid as I was, and there was scarcely room for our carriage, a

large Dutch wagon, the only vehicle safe in the roads up and down such hills as we had to pass.

"Now before returning to my home I will relate a few little incidents that diversified my life while on this visit. Soon after I went there, after I had succeeded so well in making my caps, I found Aunt had, as every housekeeper has, abundance of sewing to do, and, as she had been so kind to me, I volunteered my services, which were thankfully received, and from that time I had plenty of occupation; mending and making for the children, Edward and myself. Aunt always insisted that I should not let anything of the kind prevent my going out whenever I wished, or reading or writing and so forth. There were no carriage roads except for large wagons, as I said above, and the only possible way we girls could ride, was either on a single horse or on a pillion behind some beau who should invite us. Some had horses and side-saddles and, of course, could ride, being accustomed to it, but I had never mounted a horse except on a pillion, which was the most common method in those primitive times; accordingly, many were the rides we had over hill and dale that summer. Our schoolmaster took quite a fancy to me, (I believe because, in a grand romp at blind-man's-buff one evening at Uncle's, in catching him when blinded, I tore off the tail of his go-to-meeting coat, for which I was duly penitent and mended it on so nice the next day, that the rent was scarcely visible), and was always

ready with his fine horse and handsome pillion to take me, whenever a riding party was proposed. In this way, we visited all the villages in the vicinity at various times, and a merry party we were. I grew so expert that I could sit on the pillion while the horse was cantering on with those who had side saddles, with very little aid from holding on. But to let you see I did not waste all my time frolicking, I must tell you how I was tried by my aunt, the spring after I went there. One morning after breakfast, Aunt came into the sitting-room, where I had been setting things in order, bringing in a whole piece of linen which looked as if it had just been boiled out, ready for sewing, and said in her cheerful manner, 'Here, dear, I have brought you linen, it is to make shirts for your uncle; here is one to measure by and you may be all summer making them, if you like.' 'I shall like to do them very much,' said I, 'when will you cut them out?' 'Oh, you must cut them out yourself, I am very busy preparing to move.' 'Oh, my dear aunt! I never cut out a shirt in my life. I dare not do it.' 'Fiddle-de-de,' said she, 'there must be a first time, and you may as well begin now as ever. A young woman is not fit to be married until she can make a shirt.' 'But I never cut out one, I fear I shall spoil the linen.' 'I'll venture that; cut out one and make it, we shall see.' So saying she left the room to my dismay; but I was too proud not to try, and went to work resolutely, and made out bravely, so that,

before I left there, I made the six shirts, besides all my playing and riding, and had the credit besides of doing them very well.

“The summer soon passed away and I began to grow impatient to go home. The March previous (1791), my mother had another child born, Catherine, and I had but seldom heard from home. I also thought Edward was not contented, although he said nothing by way of complaint. But Daniel, Uncle's eldest son, was very near his age, and perhaps he was not wanted, or was more useful than his cousin, as I often heard Uncle praise him; so that I found he wished to go home with me. And, with the first good sleighing, Uncle fulfilled his promise and carried us home; and never was the old saying more heartily verified that ‘Home is home, though ever so homely’ than by my experience in this case. Our friends had been very kind to us. My aunt I loved dearly, but, in their sentiments and habits of thinking, they were entirely different from my parents, and I felt as if I was really at home when our daily tasks were done and we could sit down and enjoy ourselves again together of an evening.”

CHAPTER VI

JOURNEYS' ENDS AND LOVERS' MEETINGS (1792-1794)

Royall Tyler's arrival with Crock and Smut—vivid recollections of his wooing—his hopes for Mary's father and brother in Vermont. Sad plight of the Palmers—eve of departure of men—anticipations of the lovers. The men's journey to Vermont—father's letters on the way and from Woodstock. Mary's "boarding out" as teacher—life in the Bullock home—a rustic booklover—school-ma'am and flock. An impostor's visits and stories—the theft of the love token.

"I HAD been at home¹ but a few weeks when your father again appeared among us. And now he came with a fine span of black horses, which, with his accustomed facetiousness, he named Crock and Smut. I have already said enough of my foolish feeling towards him to excuse my saying how glad I was to see him. I say foolish, because as yet he had never said anything to me which ought to have made me believe he had any more affection for me than for my sister, except that common but improper way he had of calling me his 'little wife.' But now he acknowledged that, since he saw me at my uncle's, he had determined in his own mind that it was quite indispensable to his happiness

¹ At Framingham after the New Lebanon visit, 1791-1792.

that I should become his wife. This he told me, first (although, owing to my unguarded manners towards him, no doubt he had little doubt of my sentiments on the subject, but he was too much of a gentleman to presume upon that), and pled his cause with all becoming diffidence. He told me of his prospects in the new world he had adopted as his home; that he had recently been elected state's attorney for the district in which Guilford (Vermont) was situated and he had now come partly to take my unfortunate father to a place [Windsor, Vt.] where he thought he would be appreciated and be able to gain an honorable living. True, it was sixty miles from where he lived, but the people were more wealthy there and more able to be liberal to a tutor for their children. But his chief errand was to know if I had retained friendship enough for him, notwithstanding all his faults and all his misfortunes, to be willing to allow him the hope that I would share his misfortunes in a new state for better and for worse. It would have been too barefaced prudery for me to disguise the unqualified joy with which I received the proposal, especially as he had always read my heart from a child, and I said something to this effect. 'This was the foundation of my hopes,' said he; 'amidst all my disappointments and misfortunes, I believed there was one faithful heart in the world on whom I could rely.' These recollections, however vivid and joyous to me, my dear children, must be mawkish to you.

Suffice it to say, he found my parents little less rejoiced than myself. Mr. Tyler did not expect or ask for any set time. He said he must 'prepare a cage before he took his bird.' He had the prospect of a house the next spring. It was then owned and occupied as a store and dwelling by a Mr. Lazell, I think, who had recently failed, and was about closing up his business. 'I have the care of his affairs and am promised the refusal of the house, but I thought I would be sure how my own suit prospered, before concluding the bargain.' He then said he must go and see his mother, and we were to get my father and Hampden ready while he was gone. Hampden was only twelve or thirteen; he had studied Latin a little, was a bright but heedless boy, and I trembled lest he should give his friend trouble, especially as I was not to go, I know not for how long, but he had the benefit of a great deal of good advice from his father and mother. Mr. Tyler said there was a Mrs. Ward there who would see to him. He was to read and study in Mr. Tyler's office. As a young law student, Mr. Tyler said, he would have great advantages; that much of the business in that new country was done in justices' courts; that Hampden would accompany him to various towns in the vicinity and have an excellent chance, if he was attentive and observing, to become intimately acquainted with the manners and customs of the people, before he was old enough to be expected to take any active part in their

affairs. Hampden listened with all imaginable eagerness, and, no doubt, profited by the lessons, for in time he became very popular.

Mr. Tyler soon left us to visit his mother, and, when he returned, he seemed depressed in spirits, but brought us a large trunk tightly packed with everything a parent could wish for an outfit for a daughter. Here, my darling children, began to come a painful reaction. The idea of being his for life, of spending that life in doing everything to make him happy in my power, was bliss to me, and it was not for some time that I realized my total dependence upon him! He tarried but a short time, being, as he said, compelled by business to be at the circuits of the courts, which, at that time began in December. He said he should go immediately with my father to Windsor where lived Judge Somebody, I forget who, and a Mr. Curtis, whose children were to be the first scholars. I presume he felt sensibly the burden he was taking upon himself, but he said nothing of the kind, and I have no doubt his evident depression (which affected me so much that he perceived it and tried to rally), proceeded from his mother's objection to the connection. He had ever been a spoiled child, and unused to being thwarted in his inclinations. This, however, is only my conjecture, as he ever preserved a profound silence on the subject. I think, however, I had good reason for my conjecture, because he would otherwise have carried me to see her

or brought her to see me. Many will naturally say or think that, under such circumstances, they would never have consented to the alliance, but 'circumstances alter cases' and, as excuse for me, such must take into their consideration the desperate situation of our family then reduced to the last extremity. We must be broken up and dispersed in the spring. My uncles were determined to sell, and where should we go? No doubt some way of obtaining my living would have offered, but here was the dream of my life, my infant aspirations, come to me, soliciting my acceptance; in fact, the friend I had always loved since my remembrance, declaring the union absolutely necessary to his future existence in this life. If I refused, he should struggle no longer, while by yielding I secured also a friend for my father and brothers. My mother could go to her mother and so forth, how could I suffer circumstances of mere etiquette to influence me! I knew that Mr. Tyler had relinquished the rents of all the real estate left him, for the support of his mother, and had located himself far away from her. She had another son with her; why should I sacrifice so much? At all events, I did not feel strength of mind to do it; and, if I was wrong, may God forgive this and my many other transgressions! I was amply punished by the constant fear that my husband had a feeling of regret, whenever he thought of his mother; still I had no other cause but my own consciousness of error in

this thing. He never, by the smallest hint or word, gave me reason to think so. And, although I often in years after urged him to visit her, he would turn away and, looking grave, preserve a profound silence. This I always took as a request, or command, not to mention the subject and, of course, I desisted. But enough of this unpleasant reminiscence; let us proceed to pleasanter scenes and recollections.

“Wherever your father was guest in those days, he spread joy and hilarity about him, especially among children. Sophia was a very interesting child; then there were George and little Kate just running alone, besides Hampden and Edward, who were old enough to be quite companionable, Betsey and myself.¹ He had brought everyone a present from Boston, and for Hampden some articles of clothing. He also had young Royall, his brother's son, whom he was taking along to place in Chesterfield Academy, which was then becoming famous, such institutions being at that day ‘few and far between.’ It was for the benefit of a little girl in that school he afterwards wrote the fable of ‘The Farmer and his Colt.’ Royall was a beautiful bright boy, and much pleased with the idea of going so long a journey with his uncle. The travellers were to leave us the next day. I believe I said before that Hampden was to go then, but it was finally decided that, as Mr. Tyler was not going directly home, he

¹ For ages of Palmer children, see Appendix A.

should wait for another opportunity. The weather was also very severe.

“That evening was a mixture of joy and sorrow to us all. Our hearts were sad at parting with my father under such, at the best, doubtful circumstances, but it seemed so much better than anything else in prospect that we all had to put forth our best endeavors to keep up his spirits. We talked and laughed a great deal. Your father amused us by recounting his adventures among the Green Mountains. Among other anecdotes he told how he had been invited by the wardens and vestry at Charlestown No. 4, as it was called in New Hampshire, to read the Episcopal services in their church, on a certain Sabbath; they, having no clergyman there then, were in the habit of having lay-reading. It was just before Christmas, and the court had been sitting there or were to sit soon after, I forget which. There were many lawyers and the judges, and many more respectable people congregated in the little village, some of whom were lovers of the church and her beautiful liturgy, and he was solicited by all such to officiate, and did so; and, so far as the Prayer Book and Scripture lessons went, there was nothing uncanonical in his doing so. But he also read a sermon of his own composition which was uncanonical, and which I now have in the house. A most beautiful sermon, and orthodox for anybody.¹

¹ This sermon, still preserved, is based upon Luke II, 13-14. Among the Tyler papers is also “a prayer after sermon on Christmas Day.”

“It was in an evening gathering of sober folks, that he had let it be known to some that he had written several sermons. Of course he was solicited to read one, and probably no one knew any better, for the Church was a stranger in this part of the world then. But the sermon was so much admired that he was solicited to read again on the approaching Christmas, and, having one written for Christmas, although some time before, he was persuaded again and again loaded with praise and approbation from all. ‘After this,’ said he, ‘I was strongly solicited to turn my thoughts to the Church and prepare to take orders, being assured that I had mistaken my vocation, that it was my bounden duty to turn my talents that way. And in truth it would have been a rest to my soul at that time had I dared, but a consciousness of having lived too gay a life in my youth made me tremble lest I should bring in some way disgrace upon the sacred cause!’ And I sincerely believe him. He never ceased to regret his decision. But, no doubt, it was best as it was. God overrules all events for our good. At this time and in connection with this conversation, he repeated to us all the Lord’s Prayer, as I never heard it from any other mouth.

“After the family retired, we sat a short time and then your father said: ‘From henceforth, my beloved, you are to look to me for everything you want. It is no more than fair that you should share what I have

of this world's goods, when I look to you for all my happiness. As soon as I shall have my house ready, I shall come and claim you for my own, till then you and your mother and sisters must amuse yourselves in making such preparations as will make you appear with respectability among the simple excellent people with whom I live. Those around us will like you all the better for not appearing in any way above them, and I need not tell you that it is love and not mere outward circumstances that will constitute our happiness. The trunk I brought contains all I could think of, and, if anything more is wanted, let me know; you must write often, I shall look to your letters for all my comfort and will answer faithfully. Let Hampden pursue his Latin studies, he is too young yet to read law to advantage.'

"You, my dear children, must put in my rejoinders in their proper places in the above speech and imagine many more kind things he said. I longed to inquire about his visit to his mother, but soon found it to be a tabooed subject and was obliged to give it up. 'You and I,' said he, with marked emphasis, 'must now and henceforth be all the world to each other,' and, rising from his seat, walked the room with rapid steps a few moments, evidently very much affected. What could I say? My heart said, 'Amen,' to those words, but I made no answer. And soon after he retired. The next morning early, they left us, as early as possible.

The weather was tremendously cold; no stoves were in existence then, and it was a real job to get breakfast for travellers. We had prepared as well as we could the night before. Still there was much to do and think of. My blessed father felt the separation bitterly; there never was a man more devotedly attached to his wife and family, and to leave them under such circumstances needed all his Christian fortitude and faith. I find a letter from him written on the journey which describes what they suffered in better language than I can, and will make you better acquainted with him. These three letters are all I can give you from him. It must have been two years after the last was written that he met his sad death from a fall from a bridge which was building in Woodstock.

“This is the first date, although the next alludes more to their journey; this to his feelings upon leaving, to seek his fortune as it were, and to my prospects which, of course, interested him very tenderly and deeply. It was written the day he left us, probably the first evening on the road, when his heart was full.

“FITZWILLIAM, Febr'y 24th, 1794.

“My dear, amiable girl has it not in her power to enter perfectly into the feelings of her father; this much she knows, that he is tender, generous and fallible. The scenes now before us are fraught with events, most probably happifying. Be prepared lest they

should be otherwise. The scene is entirely new and has this advantage at present, that there is much to imagine and some to fear. Your education has been such that my soul is wrapt up in confidence that you will act a part on the stage of life which will recompense the kind and generous conduct of your friends. I meant to write *friend*, emphatically, but my pen has made it appear, friends. Those of us who know you feel that you are good, amiable, and, what is of infinite more importance, have fixt and firm principles of action. Be not over anxious about your father! Providence will secure him through every trial. Be very kind and attentive to her who gave you being.

“Give a kiss to Sophia, George and Katy.

“JOS. P. PALMER

“P. S. Tell my beloved Betsey, I shall write her the next stage.”

“CHARLESTOWN, Febry 26, 1794.

“MY DEAR POLLY:

In a postscript to a letter to your sister I remember a promise of writing to you the next stage. Mr. Tyler has advised you what a severe time we had from Keene to Walpole. Poor Royall! 'Twould have made your heart ache to hear him beg us to stop somewhere, that

he might warm himself! In this severe cold and blowing of snows, we turned the horses' heads down a steep hill to a house, never expecting to turn the sleigh without taking off the horses. The old man and woman received us kindly. They were shelling corn; they moved their tub and swept away the cobbles, brightened up the fire and helped us to seats. After we had got our young friend's buskins off, and a little meliorated ourselves by a good fire, I could not but advert to the circumstances of our host. The house was neither shingled nor clapboarded except on the roof. Except at the head of the bed, where there was a sheet nailed up, between every board I could put my finger out of doors; at one place I did with great ease put my fist out. There was a fine ewe and lamb in the room fenced in by chairs. This old couple removed from Easton about twelve years ago. When we left them, Mr. Tyler pressed some change to the old lady. She at first refused to receive it, but finally took it on his telling her that it might perhaps enable her to give a meal of victuals to some unfortunate person forced by severity of weather to call at that house. The man appears to me broken-hearted, and the woman too flippant for a person of her years. But the great I AM alone knows our real character. Farewell.

"J. P. PALMER"

MISS M. H. PALMER

“WOODSTOCK, 1st March, 1794.

[My birthday. M. P. T.]

“My Polly will naturally think the return of this day leads my attention towards her. This morning, as I was walking back and forth the room, thinking of you and the other parts of myself, I recollected the famous Mrs. Carter’s beautiful and sentimental lines on her own birthday, when she was eighteen years old:

‘Addressed to her Mother.

‘Through each event of this inconstant state,
 Preserve my temper, equal and sedate.
 Give me a mind that nobly can despise
 The low designs and little acts of vice.
 Be my religion such as taught by thee,
 Alike from pride and superstition free.
 Inform my judgment, regulate my will,
 My reason strengthen and my passions still.’

We owned the volume at Germantown, and perhaps your mother may recollect more of it.

“I left Mr. Tyler at Charlestown, about thirty-eight miles from this place, last Thursday. I arrived here the evening of the same day. Capt. Baker received me with a great deal of politeness; said I might depend upon every service it was in his power to render me. Said he was under the necessity of spending that evening abroad, and should be obliged to set off on a journey on the morrow; as soon as he returned, which would be

in two or three days, he would pay particular attention to me; meanwhile, he thought it best I should tarry where I was. He gave me free access to his books at the store, that I might spend my time as agreeably as possible during his absence.

"A few minutes after I entered this house Col. Hurd¹ of Boston came in. I have received great attention from the Colonel and through him from Col. Buck, the attorney general,² and from a Mr. Jacob,³ an eminent lawyer in this state. Last evening they invited me to their chamber, where I spent my time with pleasing satisfaction until half past ten o'clock when I retired.

"2nd March. I am now in the same chamber in which I delivered your mother's and your letter to Mr. Tyler. I have before told you he showed much sensibility in reading those letters.

"The court rose about five P.M. yesterday. All the gentlemen left the house except Col. Hurd and Col. Buck. They parted with me this morning before breakfast. Col. Hurd told me at parting, 'Take our chamber.' I thanked him for his kind hint, but at the same time told him the landlord had voluntarily promised it to me, as soon as the attorney general left

¹ Rebecca Lappington's husband. (M. P. T.)

² Daniel Buck of Norwich early settler of state and Revolutionary veteran, was speaker of legislature and M. C. He died in 1817.

³ Afterwards one of the side (Supreme Court) judges with your father. (M. P. T.) Stephen Jacob, Yale graduate (1778), came to Windsor in 1780.

it. If I had not suffered more in my feelings for ten years past than, I believe, ever man suffered before, I should have been as agreeable a companion as your mother thought me when we were first acquainted. Your mother was sure that my conversation and address was very different from common gallantry. My principles were good, I had read much, I had a retentive memory; by these means I gained her love and unbounded confidence. May that friend with whom you may have tender connection equal your father in a firm, virtuous and persevering resolution never to injure a confidence the most amiable and delicate imaginable! In every other virtue, may he far surpass him! As it is impossible for me to doubt Mr. Tyler's attachment to my family, I throw off as far as I can all anxious thought about them, committing them to the care of our Common Father and under Him to the care of our friend.

"May angels guard thee! Farewell here and hereafter!"

"The following fragment bears date the August following the above and is all I have found. It was written on the back of the above; why they were so long delayed I do not know, but communication by letters was in that day very slow. Perhaps he had mislaid the first, but, as there is nothing said, we can only conjecture. There is written on the margin: 'Rough draft of letter to Polly, August 7, 1794.'

“ ‘I received your pathetic letter of March first the latter part of June. I thank you for your very kind expressions towards me. Persevere in that confidence and firm reliance on Divine Providence and you will be supported. Comfort and soothe your mother under her severe trials. I am yet in no way to assist her but by and by, perhaps, I shall be. I have some thought of writing to her but I don't know, I can see no good it can do. You will observe that probably you and I were writing at one and the same time to each other. Farewell!’

“From this conclusion, it appears this was a kind of P. S. to the foregoing, and I presume he had been busily engaged as teacher the intervening months, and had entirely forgotten it until he came across it among waste papers. This must have been two years, at least, before I came to Vermont. The summer after, or rather the spring after my father left us,¹ there happened a curious little event in my checkered history, which I intended to pass over, but, happening to speak of it to Amelia, she advises its insertion. Perhaps it may enliven a dull tale, and, if you do laugh at my egotism, it is better than making you sad, at all events.

“Sometime in March came a Col. Bullock, one of the substantial farmers of the town, very desirous to obtain one of Mother's daughters as a school teacher. At

¹ Mary seems to be wrong here. Her “boarding out” experience was in 1793, not 1794.

first we all said no at once, but finally let him go away with an assurance that we would think of it and let him know in a week. The fact was, he selected me, and I had a great deal to do and think of, but Mother seemed pleased with the plan. He had said there were five or six neighbors who lived in the south part of the town, that they had a number of little children who could not go far to school, and they had agreed to club together and hire a ma'am for three months. They would give half a dollar a week and board in his family; that they had a house in his yard, which had been a carpenter's shop, which would make a nice schoolroom if I would come. 'He had hear'n from the preceptor of the academy up in town that we were young women of good larn'en, and he should be quite pleased to have the oldest of us; the youngest he thought too young.' Poor man, if he had but known what was what, he would have chosen her,—she was much the best qualified. Mother urged it, as it would be earning a little. A little, indeed, but Mother and Betsey promised to work for me what time they could get. I finally consented to go the first of April.

"Col. Bullock came at the set time for me, and took me to his house. This was the only time I was ever domesticated in a genuine New England farmer's family, although, since living in Framingham, I had been intimately acquainted and visited socially with several. I was well accommodated, had the best room,

and bed, with white curtains, bare floor, and had to go to the sink in a back room to wash; the wash bowl was an iron skillet in which every member of the numerous family, father, mother, and ten children (all who were old enough) performed their ablutions.

"I went there Sunday evening, that I might be ready to begin school Monday morning. I had always been in the habit of early rising, so I was up as soon as anyone. Made my bed and put my room in nice order. You must bear in mind that I was eighteen the first of that month [1793], shy and timid, thinking everyone knew more than I did, till taught otherwise by experience. Never having been to school myself, I knew nothing about organizing one, and had told the Colonel so, but he was sure I could teach their little ones, and so was I, but it must be in my own way. To this he agreed; nevertheless I trembled at the idea of facing my scholars. I sat down at my window, heartily wishing myself at home; presently Mrs. Bullock entered, curtsying and wishing to know what the school-ma'am would choose for breakfast. 'We eat milk, but you can have some tea if you like.' This was said in a pleasant voice and smiling countenance. I answered, 'I could eat milk but would prefer some tea.' 'Very well, I like you should be suited, and I dare say the Colonel will like to keep you company, he is an awful lover of tea; here, Tirza, come and set the table; Ma'am has fixed her room so nice, we will have her breakfast

here, and set a cup for your father. And bring some wood to make a little fire, it is cold.' I protested against making so much trouble, would quite as well take my breakfast in her nice kitchen. This was overruled by the united voices of the Colonel and herself, and, ever after while I stayed there, the Colonel and I had our breakfast and tea together in my room, which was below stairs, and adjoining the kitchen; the kitchen was the common sitting room of the family; besides being the sleeping-room of the Colonel and lady and of as many little ones as could sleep in a trundle bed. I suspect my room was the only other room below, I never saw any other. The kitchen was very capacious; and there were a number of back rooms where in summer all the housework, making cheese and butter, baking and brewing, was done. Mrs. Bullock was famous in all those branches of business; especially did she pride herself in her beer made from all the roots and herbs she could get in the woods, and it was a delicious beverage. She also excelled in economy. She portioned out each one their allowance of bread and milk morning and evening, together with two baked apples each, that is, for her children. The Colonel and I always had enough on our table; excellent brown bread, butter and cheese, and as many baked apples as we wished. Baked beans and Indian pudding were served regularly for dinner once a week at least, and we used to have them warmed up for breakfast as long as they lasted. At length the

Colonel thought it necessary to apologize to me for their frequent appearance. 'I am afraid, ma'am, you do not relish these beans as much as I do.' 'Oh, yes, sir, I like them very much for breakfast.' 'So do I,' said he, helping himself bountifully, 'they are excellent substitutes for tea,' meaning doubtless an excellent accompaniment. I wish I could recollect all the instances in which this good man murdered 'the King's English,' it would amuse you; but, if I could remember, I could never convey the exquisite look of satisfaction which pervaded his whole person after perpetrating such ludicrous blunders, which he conceived to be undoubted evidence of his learning. Nevertheless, he was a really good man, and so was his wife a good woman, but on a smaller scale.

"Well, at the usual hour I went to my school-room. It was quite comfortable, an arm chair for me beside a cheerful fire and small benches which showed pretty plainly that I was not expected to have many scholars, or to teach them to write. In fact there were never over a dozen, of all sizes from three to ten years old. I soon found there were not more than two who could read together and most of them required individual attention. I began by being very polite to them, addressing them as Miss and Master so and so, and treating them very kindly, helping them all they needed; there were but two or three boys, very small, those I employed in attempting to make letters on their

slates, which delighted them, and especially as I never blamed them for failures and praised every degree of success greatly. In a week, the Colonel began to wonder how I contrived to keep such a flock of young things so still. I think there were only two of his there, and they were under good government at home, so their example helped me very much, and I got on much better than I expected. Most of them were a, b, c, and ab scholars, and those a little more advanced were bright and pleased to learn. I went home regularly every Saturday and spent Sunday; to do this I had to keep all day Wednesdays. In the long summer afternoons, the Colonel frequently came in early from his work and I would find him with clean shirt ready when school was done to sit down in my room or in the front entry, which opened into it, and hear me read aloud some poem or drama of which he was very fond and showed a good deal of taste, and, not being a good reader himself, relished hearing me read extremely. Sometimes his wife and daughter Tirza joined the party a short time till evening duties called them away. Mrs. Bullock had her tenth babe in her arms then, but a few weeks old when I went there, the homeliest babe I ever saw. The father's features were large and coarse, and the mother's far from beautiful. One day we were all sitting by the fire in my room, the child lay upon its mother's lap laughing at her chirruping, the mouth literally extended from ear to ear. 'Stop,

wife,' said the Colonel, 'your boy is homely enough when he keeps his mouth shut.' 'Never mind,' said she with a shrewd smile, "if he is homely, he has got the right sort of looks.' The Colonel received this retort with a hearty laugh. It was in fact the image of him in miniature.

"I wrote to your father how I was spending my time. His reply rather annoyed me. He coldly observed that teaching was a respectable employment, but he had supposed that he had left me enough to do and did not mean that I should feel under necessity of resorting to anything of the kind. I expected commendation and was quite vexed, but from him nothing vexed me long. It served, however, to prevent my engaging for another term, and my three months slipped away rapidly. I had the satisfaction of hearing it said that the little ones learned more than ever they did in so short a time, and a wish that Miss Palmer would keep all summer; but I was heartily sick of doing what I felt conscious I was not qualified to proceed with; my scholars were wanting to study arithmetic already and I was not able to teach them further, so I took leave of school-keeping and went home rejoicing.

"Do you want to read another anecdote of my early life? Amelia wants me to relate it, and, if it will amuse a solitary moment for any of you, I will try. It will show one of those curious tricks so often practiced by cunning rogues upon a credulous and benevolent com-

munity. It occurred the year before my father left home (1793).

“The first visit we had from the gentleman was in the winter. We were assembled, my father, mother, Betsey and myself, in our sitting room of an evening, reading and sewing when a thundering knock at the front door made us all start; my father hastened to see who was so importunate. It was very cold, snowy weather, and we feared some one was suffering. My father soon returned, followed by a gentleman who seemed almost perished. We all arose and made way for him to come to the fire; my father beckoned my mother out of the room and told her we must try to get this person some supper and a bed for the night at least. ‘But who is he?’ said Mother. ‘I don’t know, sufficient that he is a brother Mason and in distress.’ Betsey and I were summoned to the consultation, and among us we contrived the supper and lodging. It was very inconvenient, the fire in the kitchen had been out for hours, and everything was frozen. We concluded that a cup of tea, some toast and cheese would do, and my father exerted himself to get a good fire, and Betsey and I did the rest. After the gentleman had his supper, and became warm and refreshed, he proved very interesting; said his home was on the North River in New York; that he was a widower, that he had lost a dear and lovely wife in a very sad manner but a few months after their marriage. ‘She was fond of riding,

and we were treating ourselves to a ride on the beautiful banks of our magnificent river; her horse was spirited, but she was such a perfect horsewoman I felt no apprehension. On one side of the road were a long range of woods where sportsmen regaled themselves; on the other, far below our path, rolled the river. We were chatting carelessly along when suddenly the report of a gun, apparently very near, made my wife's horse rear and plunge down the bank. She was so startled that she lost all command of herself and was flung down the precipice senseless. When I reached her, I thought she was killed, but it proved that her limb was awfully fractured above the knee. She survived but a few days, and here,' says he, pulling a black ribbon from his bosom, 'is all I have of one so lovely and so dear.' So saying, he showed us a bone set in a silver rim, which, he said, was a piece of her thigh bone which was so badly broken!

"You may be sure we sympathized deeply in his misfortunes. He went on to tell how long he was incapacitated for business by this shock; how his affairs became deranged, and he was just aroused to try what his brother Masons throughout the country would do to assist him to pay his debts and get started again in business. My father told him frankly his situation; with a large family to support he could do no more than afford him shelter from the storm, and a night's lodging. 'Perhaps you can give me a letter of introduc-

tion to some brother in Boston?' said he. And I believe my father did do so, so far as directing him to the desired dwelling as an entire stranger, except those mystic bonds by which, while many no doubt reaped benefit, some rogues availed themselves to get a shelter from the storms of life, physical and moral. This individual stayed with us till the storm was over and then proceeded on foot to Boston. We asked father how he could know so quickly that he was a brother Mason. 'Oh, by shaking hands with him!' said he. And this was all we learnt of the mystery.

"This was in the winter; towards spring your father made us his first visit, after my return from New York, and told the 'secret of his love,' and his hopes of finding some more congenial employment for my father. At that time, that is, during that visit, he brought me a simple little present; it was a black velvet bracelet with a clasp, two bright steel hearts on which was engraved, 'True as steel,' this he clasped on my arm, saying, 'Let it be an emblem of our love.' The look, the action, everything, made me value it above rubies; and I wore it constantly. It was the subject of many jokes among our young acquaintance, in the course of that spring and summer, connected with your father's visits (for he came again in his sulky, as soon as the roads were settled). At length, who should come again but our Free Mason visitor; again my father would have him received, and treated to the best we had.

He was very sad and depressed, and, as Father wished it, we all did all we could to amuse and cheer him. Betsey and I walked in the fields with him, and read with him at home; he stayed about us two or three days, and was very annoying on every account to us all. Mother began to be out of patience; whether she induced my father to give him a friendly hint or not, I do not know, but at last he announced his intention to go that afternoon. Betsey and I were seated in the parlor with him expecting him to go every moment. He sat at one side of the table that stood under the looking glass, and I sat at the other, my arm on which was my precious bracelet lay on the table. He very politely asked to look at the inscription. I unclasped it and handed it to him, he looked at it, admired it very much, and rose and walked out of the room. I had no idea but that he would be directly back; an hour passed, we wondered what had become of him, but supposed he had gone to the field where my father was making hay. I felt very uneasy about my bracelet. Betsey laughed at me; just as if that gentleman would hurt it; time slipped away. At last my father came from the field without his guest, had seen nothing of him since dinner. No doubt he was gone and probably pawned it that night for his night's entertainment. I had a hearty cry, feeling as if the loss in such a strange way of my precious token was ominous of all sorts of misfortunes. We never heard any more of the scamp

till we read in the Boston papers an accurate description of his person, and minute details of his lovely wife's death just as he had told us, and advertising him as a great impostor, who was travelling through the States, under pretense of being a Free Mason in distress, fleecing money wherever he could obtain it under false pretenses. I never heard of or saw my dear bracelet again. I felt indignant at myself for letting him take it. I sat down immediately and wrote to your father all about it. He had heard of the first visit we had had and laughed at my father for being taken in by his stories. And now the pleasure of being a prophet, perhaps, warded off his chagrin at my folly; at any rate, he only laughed at my taking it so much to heart."

CHAPTER VII

THE YOUNG WIFE (1794-1796)

The private marriage—Royall Tyler's visits to Framingham—the play of "Othello" in Boston—announcement of marriage—the birth of young Royall—enforced postponement of journey to Vermont—spiritual influences and visions—Sophia's tumor—the gallant husband. Winter journey to Vermont—preparations and arrangements—departure from Framingham—first day's drive to Westminster—second day's drive to Orange—inns in these towns—Tyler's account of Guilford neighbors—entrance into Vermont at Fort Dummer—"the fair captive's" story—approach to Guilford—greetings at Guilford.

"YOUR father came to see us early in May (1794) after he had settled my dear father in Vermont, part of the time in Windsor at Mr. Curtis's, and part of the time in Woodstock. He (your father) then went to visit his mother, and, on his return, was more depressed than before, and told me that he was about to put my love and confidence in him to the test. He was troubled, and I must not ask how or why; I must believe that his happiness depended upon me. In short, I must consent to a private marriage, and to its being kept secret, if possible, till winter, when he could come for me in a sleigh, travelling otherwise for me and baggage being impossible. And he must return home in a few

days, after he had made me his forever. Much more he said, and you should have known his powers of persuasion, our desolate circumstances without his friendship and protection, and also what an almost idolater your mother was, how her whole heart was bound up in him, how implicitly I trusted every word he said, before you can realize what I suffered. I looked upon my helpless mother and little children; he promised to pay a good price for my board which would be a great thing for them. But why so private? Why so secret? To these questions he answered, 'If it cannot be so, we must part, and I must go my solitary way alone!' My mother and sister were consulted, and, to make this painful subject short, suffice it to say, we were married as privately as possible, and, in all these things and everything else in his power, he ever most conscientiously performed his part to his life's end.

"But my anxieties and sufferings the ensuing summer were intense. It is morally impossible to keep an event of this kind secret in a country community. It was not long before my mother was told that Mrs. Somebody had said that Mrs. Somebody else had heard that I was married at such a time to that gentleman who had been here so often of late. I wrote my husband what rumours were afloat. He begged us to keep dark as long as possible, promising to come for me the first sleighing. But alas! everything seemed to conspire against this foolish secrecy. He told me

himself afterwards he considered it the great sin of his life. Still he never would divulge the reason, but was ever nervous and agitated when it was approached.

"Now my own health became impaired, partly, no doubt, from anxiety. The idea of his mother's disaffection haunted me continually and made me wretched. I kept entirely at home, being very busy with my preparations to go away, and even the ordinary alterations in the improvement of my dress were cause for observation, for my husband insisted upon my wearing the articles he had given me. This was very injudicious, if he wished me to remain unnoticed. He had brought me from Boston a black satin cloak, short as the fashion then was, trimmed with white fur spotted black, very dressy, but I did not wear that till the interdict was removed. He came to see me again that summer and carried me to see my friends at Watertown and Boston; took me to the theatre with Aunt Katy (Catherine Hunt), where I saw "Othello" performed, the famous actor Cooper performing Iago. The farce was "The Maid and the Magpie."¹ This was the first play I ever saw performed and I did not like it near so well as when I read it in the large volume of Shakespeare which I still have in ruins. I stayed

¹ The Englishman Thomas Abthorpe Cooper was very popular on the early American stage. Mrs. Tyler must have confused the performance with a later one, seen in Boston in the company of her son, John, as John Payne's "The Maid and the Magpie" (a translation of the French melodrama, "La Pie Voleuse") did not appear until 1816.

at Uncle Sam's (Samuel Hunt) that night, as did Aunt Katherine, and still they all thought it only an engagement. Uncle invited Mr. Tyler to dinner the next day, and in the afternoon we all went home to Framingham. You may be sure it was a painful visit to me. I felt guilty of acting a lie and was thankful to get home. How strange it must have seemed to my friends that none of his paid me any attention, or that I was not taken to see his mother! But the fact was that your father had somehow acquired a character of eccentricity and my friends said nothing on the subject even to me, much less to him; everyone appeared to me to be afraid of him. His reputation as an author was high, and his genius covered a multitude of faults. They knew my devotion to him and were silent. He soon left for his home; finding how unhappy I was under the existing circumstances, he did not forbid my owning our true state, if anyone should ask me. I told him I could not consent to a direct falsehood. But it so happened that no one ever did ask me, and I was silent as long as possible for his sake, not for his mother's. I thought if it was she that so poisoned our felicity, it was cruel, yet I felt disposed to make all possible allowances for her prejudices.

But time proves all things, and it was ordered in Providence that my blessed first-born, Royall, should compel his father to acknowledge the state of affairs before he meant to do so. I was sadly

afflicted with toothache all that summer and autumn. I had one extracted, while my husband was visiting us, but this did little good; another and another tormented me. Twice I sent for a doctor to extract them, but my heart failed and I let him go without performing the horrid act. Before this, my mother had begun to call me by my right name. It was no longer possible to hide the truth, and I had written so to Mr. Tyler. Worn out by pain and watching, I took opium in this way; I had a piece of the gum under my pillow, and put a little piece in the tooth; this would keep me easy awhile, and I would fall asleep, but, when the effect was gone, the pain returned with intense violence; then I would sit up in bed and apply another piece of opium, and so I obtained a little rest but felt wretchedly in the morning. This was the first day of December (1794); I arose and dressed and went down to breakfast. Mother and Betsey and the boys and little girls were nearly through the meal. I sat down to the table. Mother handed me a cup of tea, I lifted it and drank one swallow when the room grew dark and Betsey caught me or I should have fallen. I had fainted and continued to have one such turn after another till near night, when I was taken with premature labor. The doctor lived two miles off, but Hampden was despatched in haste to our nearest neighbor, a Mrs. Rice, who lent him a horse to go for the doctor and came herself to our assistance and was extremely kind.

“I had made no preparations for the little one, not expecting to be confined under two months certainly, and hoping sleighing would come before that time and I might go home. Mrs. Rice and Mother set to work and soon prepared some light dress and absolute necessities; my husband had provided abundant material, but I had been so afflicted with toothache that I had done nothing for weeks. It rained that day very hard. The doctor was a young man, a Dr. Kitridge, the only one in town, but I was too ill to be fastidious, and he was very polite and gentlemanly in his manners. He had been in the room but a few moments when my darling Royall was born. It was nearly dark, and I saw nothing of the dreaded physician that night. Mother and Mrs. Rice took care of us. Perhaps there is no moment of earthly felicity equal to what a mother feels when she first clasps her babe, for whom she has suffered so much, to her bosom. Royall was very small and doubts were felt of his living, and we both suffered a good deal for some weeks; but he did live and we all know how dear he was to us all. I was very ill for a fortnight, but, by kind care and nursing, recovered rapidly after that time; our neighbors were very kind and attentive, and your dear father took care that we wanted for nothing that money could procure.

“I had frequent letters from him to be careful of myself and his boy and to be prepared to see him come for

me, the first sleighing. Said his house was ready, that he had let the basement story to a Mr. Ward, a mechanic in the place, and boarded with him, sleeping above, 'in your room.' 'The bedstead is designed for curtains in this form'; here he drew a form of it giving the dimensions, saying he had it made half a foot wider than usual for the accommodation of little Master Royall. That he presumed I had, or would have, curtains made as we had agreed. Aunt Katy Hunt came to see us about the time this letter arrived and had a hearty laugh over it, protesting it was just like an old bachelor. The weather was remarkably mild for the season; we had no frost and the grass under my chamber window, which looked out over the front yard, was as fresh on Christmas Day as in midsummer. I recollect sitting at the front window that day with my babe in my lap in the morning. It really seemed as if the elements were against us; that winter there was no snow at all till February, when we had heavy snowstorms, followed by rain and then cold. My husband said he should depend upon me to let him know if we had snow, and wished Hampden to be ready to go home with us and drive the sleigh.

"You may be sure we wrote as soon as it really bid fair to be any sleighing. It would take a week for a letter to go, and give him time to come; before that time had passed, we began to think we should be disappointed; but he came, and we hastened to pack for our

journey. There was sleighing in Vermont, but very little within fifty miles of us, and alas! there came a strong south wind with rain, and in one day destroyed every vestige of snow. Mr. Tyler decided to make a visit, and perhaps we might have another chance. He stayed till near March, when, giving up all hope, he got a pair of cart wheels of one of our neighbors, and got the neap fixed so as to tackle Crock and Smut to it, had his sleigh, which was an old fashioned one with three seats in it, fastened on to the cart wheels; these seats could be taken out if necessary and make room for trunks; here he stowed one of my trunks containing linen, sheets, tablecloths and towels, and the bed curtains, which were dark purple and white chintz, trimmed with white knotted fringe I had made, similar to that I have since trimmed bed spreads with, which I have made for my children.

“In this vehicle, and Hampden to drive, he set off for Vermont, and left me and my babe to spend another year with Mother. My uncles could not sell the place to advantage, so they let the land as usual to the halves to the neighbors, and let my mother have a share of the grain raised; they also let us keep one cow, so that with my board we passed a very pleasant year. My precious babe became the idol of the family almost. Betsey used to sit on a cricket at my feet, enraptured by his infant loveliness, he was as precocious in his mind as he had been in his entrance into this life; and,

before he was strong enough to sit alone, as he lay upon my lap, he would watch my lips with intense earnestness, as I told him to say 'Papa.' And before, he was seven months old, he would say it quite plainly. His father came to see him in the summer, but not a word of his mother passed his lips, nor did he go to see her. This was a sad damper upon my happiness. Indeed, taking all things into consideration, this year was the most remarkable of my life. My peculiar situation, perhaps, had a solemnizing effect upon my mind. I felt as if under the more immediate protection of Providence, while feeling most sensibly my sinful nature. The Bible became my constant study. I told my thoughts to no one but Betsey; she was too partial a confidante; I knew at that time my mother would not understand me. I longed for some one to advise and direct me; harassing doubts of the truth of the Scripture assailed me. I read, I prayed, yet I doubted if God would hear or forgive so unworthy a suppliant; and was there any God? Was it true that Christ died for just such sinners as I felt myself to be? That, when I would do good, evil was present with me I felt deeply conscious. Was this the spirit of God himself awakening me to think of Him, and my responsibility as His by creation and redemption?

"Those were my thoughts night and day; I found no rest but from reading the Scriptures, and yet I could not feel assured that I read them rightly. With

rapturous joy and delight I read of our Blessed Lord's gentleness and forgiveness; of his commendation of Mary when she 'washed his feet with tears and wiped them with the hair of her head'; and that 'she was forgiven much, because she loved much.' I would with joy, I thought, take her place to hear such blessed words. Such and such like had been my thoughts and reflections one evening while all were asleep but me. I retired to rest and soon fell asleep when a blessed vision, I cannot call it a dream, was sent to comfort me; and it did so, and from that day to this no doubts of the truth of Revelation have for a moment occupied my mind. Some time ago I told Amelia this dream, and she urges me to record it here. If I could hope that any human being could ever receive the consolation from it under such painful doubts as I have experienced, I should not hesitate; but no one can ever see that Sacred Countenance and hear that Voice as I heard and saw it. Nevertheless, I will relate it as a curious psychological phenomenon. I copy it from a book where I wrote it almost three years ago [in 1856] from recollection, hoping some of my children or grandchildren might like to read it while I am at rest. It has comforted me through all the trials of my life. A dream or vision, who can tell?

"I was about nineteen years of age. (I am now eighty-one). For many months I had been seriously impressed upon the subject, the importance of personal

religion. A deep sense of sin had taken possession of my soul. A strong desire to know the truth had induced me to attend faithfully upon all the means of grace within my reach—above all, to search the Scriptures diligently. But evil thoughts, painful doubts, harassed me; how, if this Book which contained such precious promises should not be true, but the work of man? How if this Saviour, so mighty, so gracious, so willing to save the wretched sinner, were only a fabulous being; what will become of one so ignorant and sinful as myself? Then did evil thoughts, almost blasphemous, distress and trouble me. I prayed for light, but still walked in darkness. Till one night after many anxious thoughts, and earnest prayers, I fell asleep, when my fears assumed a more tangible shape. I thought I was crossing a field almost interminable to appearance, barren, without vestige of foliage or green thing; but I heard the howling of wild beasts that seemed to pursue me. I ran till exhausted, feeling as if I should sink down, and expecting every moment to be devoured, till at last my path terminated in a dreadful precipice; many feet below rolled a rapid flood, black and turbid as if by an approaching storm; the wind blew, and on, faster and faster, seemed to come the howling beasts. I must be devoured or plunge down the awful gulf below me. At this fearful moment I thought a powerful arm encircled my waist, and a voice said, 'Lean on me and I will save you!' I did

so, and looking up to His face who spoke, I saw a brilliant glory, like the sun, encircled His head; and, as He supported my weary frame, the storm ceased, the howling of the beasts was heard no more. The landscape became beautiful, the river sparkled in the sun, and the sweetest peace took possession of my soul. I awoke from excess of emotion and, springing from my bed, on my knees thanked my God and Saviour for the glorious vision, which dispersed every doubt; and, from that blessed hour, I have leaned on Him, who is mighty to save and comfort those who come to Him in faith. I never felt the least hesitation in believing that the wild beasts symbolized my sins and doubts which were pursuing me into the gulf of despair from which His almighty arm and infinite mercy preserved me! Perhaps you may smile at my enthusiasm or superstition or some other ism, as you may think it, but, my darlings, there was something more in this dream than such things are 'usually made of,' or it could not have retained such an influence over my mind as it has done through all the changes and trials of this mortal life, for so many years; and still, that compassionate voice and benign countenance are present with me whenever I am tempted to despond, or tremble at the near approach of my final hour on earth. If it is a delusion, it is a most blessed one, and I can never cease to be thankful for it!

"I think it was in the summer, while I was still at home, that my sweet sister Sophia was afflicted with

an awful tumour which was apparently from under the left shoulder blade. For many weeks she was in the utmost pain and distress, and we all suffered with her, for she was always the darling of the family. Her back was much swollen, but no discoloration or apparent inflammation appeared. We had all the doctors in the town to see her, and all kinds of poultices and warm applications were made, with slight affect. We had to tend her night and day. My mother seldom took any rest except while, holding her in her lap, she rested her head on the back of an easy chair. At last we saw riding by the celebrated Dr. Spring of Watertown. Mother made us call him in. He examined the child's back and told us it was not yet ripe, but we must apply nothing but cold Indian meal and water poultices, and that he would be along again in a week and would call. We were to change the dressings as often as they became warm and dry. We followed the directions faithfully, and the cold applications relieved her much. At the appointed time the good doctor came and opened the tumour. He bade us get a basin to receive the discharge, which was nearly a pint at first and which relieved her immediately. She soon was playing about as blithe as ever; that is, in a few days. I write this for the benefit of mothers in like cases. The present practice of cold water applications to such swellings is a great improvement to cold meal and water.

“The rest of the summer passed off pleasantly. Our Watertown friends visited us occasionally and my husband came twice. Every time he brought everything he could for our comfort, and he seemed more and more delighted with his lovely boy. The last time he came before winter, the little fellow would say ‘Papa,’ every time he saw him enter the room. We women folks had as much as we could do to prepare all the things he brought, and wanted done before he came for me, which was to be the first good sleighing. This, however, never came until next February. This time when he came, among other things too many to be mentioned, he brought me a dozen teaspoons and three large spoons marked with my initials, M. P. This was delicate and kind in him, for he knew I could not purchase them, and he wished to make it appear that my parents did so. In this way he was always doing everything in his power to make me forget everything that was unpleasant in my situation; and, throughout our long life together, he was the kindest and most attentive of husbands. I often think of him now-a-days when the difference in customs, I suppose, permits my sons (whom I consider the most exemplary of husbands) to let their wives precede or follow them in the street by day, or tarry behind of an evening, letting them find their way alone of a dark night, or be obliged to the politeness of others for an escort. This he never did. He would either wait for me, or insist

on my going with him, and then give me his arm, by day or night, as politely as in the first days of our engagement. The little attentions in old married folks many think ridiculous, and others unessential, but the fact is, these, and others like them, serve to keep bright that mystic chain of mutual respect which most surely binds them fast in that holy union so essential to happiness in a long and intimate connection. But I am not writing an essay on matrimony but a simple statement of facts.

“It was in the early part of February (1796) that your father, taking advantage of the first good sleighing, came for us, me, my brother Hampden and my lovely and beloved Royall, then about fourteen months old. He said, when he first arrived, that we must hasten back, as the weather might change and disappoint us again. So all was hurry and bustle. Aunt Kate came from Watertown and brought my cousin Mary Hunt, Uncle William's eldest daughter, to bid us good-bye. Mary and I were always good friends; she was afterwards Mrs. Dr. Morse [Moore?]; John¹ carried me to see her many years after, when he was himself a young man. We had been so long expecting this event that in a week we were all ready, and our parting from home was truly a mingling of joy and sorrow! My mother and Aunt Kate were to go into business in Watertown, if they could make arrange-

¹ Her second son.

ments, and for my brother Edward we intended to find a place in a printer's office in Brattleboro, if we could, so said my husband. Sophia was to come and live with me as soon as I was settled in my new home; and Betsey, my darling Betsey, had made up her mind to become a teacher in some female academy as soon as possible. Mother would take the little ones, George and Catherine with her. Thus it was planned in our wisdom. And our uncles were willing mother and family should stay there, until the arrangements could be brought about.

“At length all was ready, the weather delightful. My traveling gear was made of a very dark blue ladies' broadcloth, a skirt and habit, as it was called, made to sit to shape like the present basque, but more like a coat, with lapels turning over, faced or trimmed with silk, and a short tail behind, similar to what we sometimes see little boys wear now; also lined with silk, and trimmed with cord and buttons. It buttoned before, ornamented with cords. On my head I wore a small beaver hat; my hair curled, and the hat set a little tilted on one side. Such was the foolish fashion, and my husband was as proud of dressing me as any little girl is of her doll. After we were all ready, he turned me round and round, surveyed me from head to foot, then passing his arm around me, strained me to his breast, whispering, ‘You look just as I want my wife to look.’ I was not just the figure I am now!

Soon Hampden drove Crock and Smut up to the door; the baggage was stowed in; we kissed good-bye. Betsey must have the last of the baby, then handed him to me. The buffaloes were snugly arranged by your father. He took his seat, and away we went, bidding a last farewell to the scenes of many pleasures, and many heartfelt sorrows! My mother's tearful eyes and hearty 'God bless you,' and the children gathered around bidding good-bye, are a vivid, though misty, remembrance. It seems more like a dream than reality. But I was young and hopeful; the event I had so long prayed for was consummated. I was going home with my husband; the realization of my young dream of happiness since my earliest remembrance! No wonder, the thought of all else soon vanished from my mind. Still we were all busied with our own thoughts. Little was said for some time. No doubt many painful thoughts mingled with our best hopes and joys. My beloved father was still our great care and anxiety. He made out to live and that was all. He seldom sent anything to his family. And how bitter were your father's reflections about his mother no one ever knew, but I felt they must be a great grief to him. I knew he had always felt a deep reverence and affection for her, and the thought that *I* had parted them poisoned my happiness, whenever I saw a cloud upon his brow so long as she lived.

"After a while, my husband, turning to Hampden

who was driving, exclaimed, 'What a grand fuss Ma'am Ward is making today at home.' 'Oh, yes, sir, Molly will have to step around faster than usual (Molly was a girl Mr. Tyler had hired to live with us as maid-of-all-work), she will have to scrub and dust at a great rate.' Then turning to me, he said, 'I have not had your curtains put up, or your carpet down, because I want you to have the pleasure of seeing them fresh and new, but I left orders with Mrs. W. to have all done before your arrival, and she is a very nice body, and you must admire and praise all her arrangements, even if they are not quite to your taste. You can make any alterations quietly afterwards.' So kindly and considerate of every one's feelings was he.

'We rode briskly on, stopping at noon to refresh and rest our little traveler who behaved beautifully. We then proceeded as far as Westminster, stopping for the night at the stage-hotel in that town. We had now come thirty miles. Here we had a splendid dinner and supper all at once; a room to ourselves, where the table was set, and a sleeping-room opening out of it. After supper the landlord came in and sat awhile smoking and talking politics with your father. He seemed quite a gentlemanly man and we soon found from his conversation that he went member from that town to the legislature; of course was well posted in the Shays' affair, being aware of the part your father had taken,

and they had a hearty laugh in allusion to the dispersal of the congregation.

“The next morning, after a good breakfast, we started again on our journey. The weather was very fine overhead, but, as we came nearer the mountainous country, the snow was very deep and the cold increased so that we stopped to warm several times in the day, and finally reached Orange¹ before sunset; here your father decided to put up for the night, at Mr. Chapin's, who kept the stage tavern there. We had no sooner arrived so near his home than almost every man we met shook hands with the ‘Squire’ wishing him joy, and many had to be introduced to me at the house where we stopped. I remember well Madam Chapin's dimpled face, as she welcomed me, and apologized for our accommodations, because ‘her house was running over full.’ She had no room where we could sit by ourselves in the evening, unless we could be satisfied with her own sleeping room, where we could have a fire and our supper. Your father told her that would do perfectly well, and we were soon introduced to a snug little room with a bed in it; and a rosy-cheeked little girl of three years old lifted up her head and your father said, ‘Ah! there is my little pet,’ upon which she covered up her head laughing. This was afterwards our friend and neighbor, Mrs. Harris. She was

¹ The route through Westminster and Orange coincides with the present line of the Boston & Maine R. R.

wide-awake to see the baby, but was not permitted to get up, although earnestly begging to do so. I carried Royall to her and laid him a few minutes upon her pillow; this satisfied her and she soon fell asleep.

“The next morning early we were on our way towards home. All this day’s ride your father and Hampden amused themselves and me by a description of our neighbors. Hampden began by wondering what Mr. Goodwin would say to me. This incited your father to speak of that eccentric individual. ‘You must be prepared, my love, to be made acquainted with a variety of the genus homo in our village¹; as well as vast varieties of scenery. Such hills you have not yet seen! As for Goodwin, he is a poor half crazy fellow, but he has got an excellent woman for his wife who has gone all through the political struggles between New Hampshire and New York and can tell you stirring stories of the Indians. They have a family of three children. Mrs. Goodwin helps support them by making muffs and tippets from cat skins, which she has the art of dressing and coloring so nicely that they sell for four or five dollars. She raises the cats for the purpose and many are puzzled to know what fur the muffs are made of. She calls them mock sable. Then she is quite a doctress, and is sent for often, in place of a physician,

¹ Guilford, then the most populous town in Vermont, was perhaps larger than it has ever been since, boasting, in 1791, 2432 inhabitants, or “about one fifteen-hundredth of the then population of the United States.”

although we have two quite decent practitioners in town. She is also an excellent neighbor. We have also another family near us. They are much more companionable than the Goodwins. This is Mr. Peck's. He is an honest hard working shoemaker, and has just been building a house, which I fear will embarrass him long; his family consists of a wife, a maiden sister, whom you must call Aunt Chloe, for everybody else does, and four children. The eldest, Polly, is a smart buxom lass, and is to be married to a young man, Thomas Hammond, her father's journeyman. Elizabeth, or, as she is called, Betsey, is quite a literary genius and writes poetry. Then comes Chloe, a diminutive specimen of womanhood, but a good industrious girl. It seems she was a twin; her brother, the only son they ever had, was a fine healthy child at their birth, while she was so tiny they tended her on a pillow several months, wrapped in a blanket, and then had to make clothes on purpose for her before she could be dressed. The boy died with what was then called camp distemper, when nine months old. The little Chloe lived through it (and died when she was forty years old, after she had lived several years in this village) and is now a neat seamstress and will be pleased to assist you with her needle whenever you wish. Then comes Rebecca, a nice little girl. But the flower of the family is Aunt Chloe. She is a maiden lady who has been a cripple from her infancy almost. As she tells

her story, when she was about five years old, she fell and put her hip out of joint. Her father had married a second wife; the poor little thing had no mother and the step-mother was cross to her. While she was in that state, she ought to have been watched and kept very still, yet the mother left her alone one afternoon while she ran to a neighbor's, promising to be back soon; but the child was afraid being alone, and after waiting, she thought, a long while, she slipped off the bed where she had been charged to keep quiet, and crawled to the door which looked into the street (it was in New Haven before the war) thinking she might see her mother coming, and see the folks go by, and then she would not be afraid. There she sat in great pain, till at last the woman came, and, "ketching her up" and scolding her for getting off the bed, replaced her without enquiring what mischief was done. Aunt Chloe says she felt something snap in her hip, when she was taken up, that hurt her very much, but she did not dare say anything till her father came home the next day, when she was in a high fever, and the joint could never be set again, so that she walks like a person who has one limb shorter than the other, and it was many months before she could walk at all. However, she says, she did become quite useful to her father. That wife died also, and she kept his house, all through the Revolutionary War, and he kept tavern in New Hampshire nearly opposite the college [Dartmouth],

then the only building. She is now quite feeble, but supports herself by spinning, sewing and knitting. Madam Peck is an excellent woman and will be like a mother to you. And you may rely upon her in sickness and health if you want help or advice, as you very likely will.'

"'How so?'" says I. 'Oh, you are such a young thing! I am not concerned but what you will acquit yourself well in the parlor, my only apprehension is in the housekeeping department.' How wide he was from the mark! As I told him, I rather prided myself in the domestic line; if I failed, I feared it would be on the score of fashionable etiquette. 'Ah, my love! Fortunately you are going among a people who will look up to you with respect to everything of that kind. Open, hospitable and friendly, they have no distinctions in society; if they have a social party, as is often the case, the whole neighborhood is invited; there is true equality there. We have two merchants, the Messrs. Houghton, two physicians, Dr. Stevens¹ and Dr. Hyde, one lawyer, your humble servant; all men of education, and their wives and families, well-bred country people, living very much alike as to style; then there are several mechanics, who will soon be the most wealthy probably, and who aim now to treat company equally well. They have generally grown up with the

¹ Simon Stevens and Dana Hyde were the principal physicians in Guilford for forty years.

place, having come here when the country was new, and neighbors were scarce, and far between, and every new comer was heartily welcome. In fact, my dear, you will find it a truly primitive state of society, and, if you have any adequate idea of the heartlessness of the world in general, you will rejoice in the friendly simplicity of this people among whom I have spent three or four years of the happiest of my life. And I rely on your prudence and discernment to continue and even add to the very extraordinarily high opinion they have formed of me. It has been my good fortune to assist some of them in settling long and vexatious disputes, and this has given me a good standing in their opinion, I suppose.'

"Thus and so judiciously did your beloved father prepare my way before me; many more things he said, which my treacherous memory will not recall. One family, however, I must not omit to introduce to you. This is the clergyman of the parish. He had now gone, I think, to Westmoreland to bring home his bride. His name was Woolidge.¹ Your father told me, as we went along that day, various anecdotes of our neighbors; among the rest, of this gentleman he said, 'His family cognomen was Woolla, but, disliking,

¹ The Rev. Elijah Woolage settled as minister in Guilford in 1794, and was dismissed in 1799. After the incumbency of the Rev. Jason Chamberlain, he returned "and was received for a time, but was dismissed in 1818." (*Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, V, s. v. "Guilford.")

the sound, he had entered college under the name, "Woolidge" and by that he was settled in Guilford; he is a man of some talents but of excessive vanity. We expect him home in a week or two; we must wait upon the bride, when she comes, and no doubt there will be many parties made for them; you must take your turn.' Besides all those I have mentioned who lived in the village, there was a wealthy and very respectable class of farmers who lived in and around Guilford. The Bullocks, Chases, Bigelows were then the bone and sinew of the country, and many of their descendants still continue so.

"It was a glorious winter's day, that of my first entrance into Vermont. About four o'clock in the afternoon we reached the banks of the Connecticut. There was no bridge then, except one formed by the operation of turning a cake of ice, as it was called. This was our bridge; it was so situated as to bring us over directly by old Fort Dummer,¹ the house then there was a pretty white cottage, owned and occupied by Col. Chandler, who had been a famous Tory and Yorkist among all the troubles the state had passed through. We did not stop there but passed on to the abode of Mrs. Tute, celebrated as 'The Fair Captive,'²

¹ Fort Dummer, which took its name from William Dummer, Acting Governor of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, was built in 1724. This is the site of the present-day Dummerston.

² The story of Mrs. Caleb Howe, "The Fair Captive" and her capture by Indians in 1755, is told in Crockett's, "History of Vermont," I, iii.

Mrs. Howe, who was taken and all her family carried to Montreal by a party of hostile Indians. She now lived with her son, Squire Howe, who was knocked about so badly by the Indians on the long journey to Canada. Mrs. Howe, it is known, was exchanged, or ransomed, and returned to her home. Her husband was killed at the time she was taken. After her return she married Mr. (Amos) Tute. He too was dead at this time, and Squire Howe occupied the old house, and his mother lived with him. She had outlived all title to be called *fair* captive, but it was very interesting to see her, and the bullet holes in the old house where she lived at the time the Indians attacked them. They were French Indians, so called because the French employed them to annoy our settlements. She said they carried her and her children to Montreal. She had a nursing infant with her. The savages quarreled among themselves about the captives, which should belong to which, as they expected ransom for them when they got to Montreal. This led to their separating her from her babe, and she could hear the poor thing crying for her, and knew it was suffering for the nourishment she herself was suffering to yield to it; but the cruel wretches would not let her come near it. All her consolation resulted from the reflection that, for their own sakes, their own interests, they would not let it starve. But at last, when she saw it, it was a skeleton of what it was when they left home; and

she told me, when they were at length brought into the governor's kitchen, she stood at the door of a back room where stood a swill pail with scraps of meat and crusts of bread swimming about in it, which she eagerly scooped out and ate with keener relish than ever she did anything at her own table. After some time they were redeemed and sent home.¹

"After sitting by her cheerful fire long enough to satisfy our curiosity and get sufficiently warm, we again resumed our journey. Five or six miles would bring us home. It was now sundown and quite cold; but Crock and Smut had been well treated by Mr. Howe, and, as is customary with those intelligent creatures, when near home they almost flew over the ground, while the road was decently level; but you all well know, we soon came to a long very steep hill. Just as we came near to the last rise of this hill, 'There,' said your father, 'once since I lived in Guilford, I was riding alone on horseback down this place, in October it was, just about the time the corn is ripe in the fields. I saw a short way before me a great black bear. I was startled at first, and did not know which was best to do, turn around and run the risk of pursuit, or go on and shout as I had heard was the best way. My business was urgent, and I chose the latter course. The bear was sitting like a dog looking directly at me.

¹ Mrs. Howe and her fellow-prisoners were redeemed through the influence of Maj. Israel Putnam and Capt. Peter Schuyler. (Crockett.)

I flourished my whip, shouting and spurring my horse, (who trembled worse than I did) towards him, and he jumped and ran into that wood there, and I never saw him afterwards. I have no doubt he took supper in Dr. Stevens' cornfield. The doctor lives on the right hand there, and is our principal physician; he has a wife and two or three little ones.'

"We next passed a neat house occupied by Major Field, a farmer. Then we came to the only meeting house in the town, Congregationalist, whose pastor was now gone for his bride. Their house was near by. Then we came to Dr. Hyde's, situated just upon the declivity of the hill we had climbed a mile or two back. And now we saw the lights of the village below, and to me it seemed as if we were coming down upon the tops of the houses, as it was too dark to see anything but the lights in the windows. Hampden laughed at my alarm, for I was really alarmed, it seemed so vast a distance down; but we achieved it safely, and in a very few moments were cantering up the well known hill where stood my first Vermont home. Mrs. Ward and Molly Clough were at the door to receive us, and eagerly relieved me of my precious burthen. The house was as neat as possible; it consisted of three rooms front, and a kitchen, buttery and so forth back.

"I found a good fire in both rooms, the parlor and our bedroom; the other room was at the other side of the parlor, and only a small bedroom. Soon after our

arrival Mr. Tyler came, and, taking my arm in his, said, 'Come and see your kitchen.' And there we found a neat little woman standing by the fire with Mrs. Ward, who introduced me to her as Mrs. John King, our nearest neighbor. She looked very young and pretty and was dressed in the fashionable costume of that day, a brilliant black Russel skirt, and white short gown, which set so closely, 'It seemed to love the waist it clasped' like that of your father's Village Beauty. She said she had recently come to Guilford, and hoped we should become good friends and neighbors. She afterwards became the mother of John King, who is now one of our townspeople. We invited her to come in and take supper with us, but she declined, saying she only ran in to see us a few minutes, she had known Mr. Tyler some time and was very glad to see me, and so she went away. Mrs. Ward and Molly soon had us a fine supper. We found our curtains all up, carpets down as we expected, and all looked very neat. We decided not to unpack our trunks till morning, as we were much fatigued, so we all retired early."

CHAPTER VIII

MARRIED LIFE AT GUILFORD. (1796-1801)

Home and neighbors—the minister and his wife. Visits of the family—John Tyler and his father, the Colonel—Elizabeth (Betsey) Palmer. A double sorrow—drowning of brother Edward—accidental death of father. “Age of Reason” and its influence on youth. Royall Tyler—anger with Hampden—“silence treatment” of Mary—love of little Royall and Jack—composition of “Algerine Captive.” Susceptible Hampden and his fair charmer. Mary’s Massachusetts family—removal from Framingham—shop at Watertown—Sophia’s stay at Guilford. Country hospitalities and pleasures. Death of Royall Tyler’s mother and legacy.

“THE next morning began one of my little troubles. Your father had been boarding all his life, where he was often vexed and troubled with unruly, misbehaved children; and had resolved in his own mind, that *his* children should be patterns of propriety and good behaviour. My little darling had always been accustomed from his birth to be petted by grandma and aunts, to say nothing of his doting mother, and always sat with one or the other at the table. Now Papa set his foot down that the baby should on no account come to the table, he must go out with Molly or sit in his father’s great chair by the fire, till we were done;

now the baby took a great dislike to Molly, and screamed if she came near him; of course he must sit in the chair by the fire. If he had not been the very best child in the world, I do not know what would have been the result; but I set him in the chair and told him, Papa said he must set there till we were done, and then I would take him. He clung to me and his eyes filled with tears; his father said, 'Sit still,' in a quick tone, and the poor little fellow let go of me and bent his head down in his lap as if about to cry, but another 'Hush,' from his father conquered; he sat still looking at me with his beautiful eyes swimming with tears, but made no noise. This little foolish thing has always clouded my remembrance of that first morning in my new home. This was the beginning of a course your father always persisted in through life; he never would have young children at the table with him. After they grew old enough to behave and be companionable, it was different; but even then he often said he would rather wait upon them first, and then have his own meals, than have to attend. This would have been a real damage to their manners, had it not been for his long and frequent absences from home when we could do as we pleased.

"After his father left the table, I took my darling, not to the table, for I thought that would spoil the lesson, but gave him his bread and milk in the kitchen. I wanted him to become acquainted with Molly, who



The Site of the Guilford Home, 1924



Grandmother Tyler's First Vermont Home
(Royall Tyler house—Guilford, 1796-1801)
Now torn down

was a good-tempered girl and felt very bad to see the little fellow sit alone in his chair, and before another meal-time she made such friends with him, that he was willing to go with her. After breakfast was over I had the visit I have so often told you, from our neighbor Goodwin. He called on purpose to see me and the baby, or as he always called him, the 'young squire.' After being introduced he made several grotesque bows to me as I sat with Royall in my lap. And then stretching out his arm oratorically he said:

‘I leave you here a little book,
For you to look upon;
That you may see his father’s face,
When he is dead and gone.’

Your father rewarded him by a hearty laugh; for myself I hardly knew what to say, being half frightened at his odd gestures, and evident intoxication, for early as it was in the day he had evidently taken his morning glass.

“Mrs. Ward, who occupied the basement of our house, formerly a store, was very kind and attentive to me, evidently considering me an ignoramus as to house-keeping, and proffered her services to assist me in any way I wished. I thanked her, but said she had already done so much, that there was very little left for me to do, and Molly could do all I had to do at present, as I was too tired to unpack trunks and should rest awhile.

This I did, because your father had cautioned me against her inquisitiveness. She therefore said, 'Well, Ma'am, I shall be below and will come when you wish; the ladies, I dare say, will call to see you as soon as they know you are here; I will come up then and introduce you.' 'That will be very kind,' said your father, 'if I should be out. You must let your little folks come up and see the baby.' This was a sugar plum to her motherly heart, and she said, 'Thank you,' and turning to me, said, 'The squire is so fond of children.'

"About the middle of the forenoon he had the sleigh tackled and rode over to Major Houghton's, and soon returned bringing little Lucretia (who was afterwards Mrs. Willard Martin), then a child of four years old. He had boarded at Major Houghton's ever since she was born, I believe, and wanted to show her his little boy. There were three Mrs. Houghtons besides Madam Houghton, mother to the three husbands, herself a widow and a very intelligent woman; had been a warm patriot in Revolutionary times, but such a devoted tea drinker that for many months she said, she used to set her tea table down cellar, lest folks should see her drink it. 'Oh,' said I, 'you were not as good a patriot as my mother; she would not drink it on any account, but substituted sage and balm.' 'More fool she!' said the old lady, 'though I did cheat sometimes and drink Evanroot tea, but I would

have my comfortable tea with my husband in the evening, and nobody was the wiser.' All those ladies called very soon to see me; two or three neighbors would send me word in the morning, that, if I should be disengaged, they would take tea with me in the afternoon, and in this way I very soon became acquainted with all the village. A more kind, good-hearted, friendly people never lived than they all proved to be, because they were so much attached to your father. If it had not been for my anxiety about my father, and also about the family I had just left, I should have been perfectly happy.

"Dr. Stevens' and Dr. Hyde's families, and Major Field's, all living within short walks from our house, although up that long steep hill, also visited us, and proved very good friends. One of Dr. Hyde's daughters, Mrs. Cromwell of Cincinnati, lately contributed fifty dollars towards building our church. In token of auld lang syne I solicited and obtained the contribution given, no doubt, more out of love for the Church than of me. At the time we lived first at Guilford, all the community were good Congregationalists, and had the Rev. Mr. Woolidge for their minister. Soon after we were well settled, he returned from his marriage tour, and brought home his bride. They lived in a house upon the hill near the old white meeting house, as it was then called. This new wife proved to be one of those uneasy spirits, who seem to delight in keeping

the neighborhood acquainted with all their domestic trials and have a peculiar knack of making these seem interesting to those who like gossip. And she very soon made her husband uneasy. It was no doubt a fact, as is now too often the case, that his salary was small, and badly paid, and she, having been the daughter of a wealthy farmer in Westmoreland, in New Hampshire, and habituated to having an abundance of everything in her father's house, could not content herself with their scanty means. As is customary in our country, the parishioners had provided a handsome reception for them, and, after they had settled down quietly, she began to visit among her neighbors, and, finding many of them living better than she could, she began to persuade her husband that he had mistaken his calling, and, what was curious about the matter, she singled us out as objects of envy. She often told me how much better I was off than they were, although I assured her I had always considered the wife of a clergyman the most enviable of women, as she could always have her husband with her, and bring up her family in the best manner just as she wished and have their father's aid, 'whereas my husband is absent much of the time and all the care devolves upon me.' 'Oh, yes,' she would say, 'but, when he comes home, he brings you pretty things, and gets money; and we delve and delve, and find it hard work to get our four hundred dollars at last, although

we have to take it in anything, at their own prices. Oh, you can't tell how trying it is." There was much truth in this, but her unhappy temper greatly exaggerated their trials and it is marvellous how so many of the best men in the world have to perform their parochial duties under such circumstances. It is the best of proof that they are the best men, that so many continue to do it. But I do think the world improves in this respect and people begin to realize that it is the will of God that his ministers should live and not starve upon the contributions of their flock.

"But to return to madam, who, no doubt, was the greatest trial her husband met with. In the course of two or three years, Mr. Woolidge, worn out with his domestic difficulties, came to your father and solicited him to permit him to read law under his direction privately, and, when the legal time expired, he meant to ask a dismissal from that parish and remove to the northern part of the state and hoped he (your father) would use his influence to get him admitted to the bar. The legal time in this state for a man who had a liberal education was three years. Your father was very loth to accede to this plan, but finally yielded, and our minister commenced his studies. This was kept so profoundly secret that not even *I* had any suspicions of it. But alas! his unhappy lady found it out, and beset him to leave when he had nearly got through, and finally, by her imprudent confidence among her

dear friends, set the parish on fire with indignation, and they insisted upon his asking a dismission immediately, which he did and left. This was a sad affair; the parish had been so disgusted with her for some time, that respect for him alone kept them contented to have her among them, and now, to find their minister, who had been as they supposed labouring all this time for their good, spending his days studying law in secret, was more than they could bear. So he formally asked a dismission and they were left alone; and, as it is probable we shall not hear any more about them in Guilford for some years, I will gratify your curiosity by relating how they sped in the meantime.

“The family went to her father’s, wife and two children; and Mr. Woolidge continued to go on with his studies somewhere, your father helping him by his influence, and finally he went to some village near Lake Champlain and located himself, removing his family there; and in due time he was admitted to the bar. I think it was the first year after we removed to Brattleboro, Mr. Chamberlain, a young minister, was settled in Guilford, where he preached until about the year 1809, when Burlington College was organized.¹ Your father was elected law professor there, and used his influence to have Mr. Chamberlain elected pro-

¹ The University of Vermont was incorporated 1791; first commencement 1804. Chief Justice Tyler was one of the Corporation 1802-13; Prof. of Law 1811-14; Rev. Jason Chamberlain, Prof. of Languages 1811-14. T. P. T.

fessor of divinity; which was no sooner done than accepted, and Guilford pulpit was again vacant. And then we were surprised to hear that Mr. Woolidge was there, soliciting forgiveness for past faults, and protesting that his conscience had not been at rest since he left them, and promising to serve them faithfully if they would receive him back. They held back some time, telling him frankly that they feared Mrs. Woolidge would not be contented to live there. He said that he had left her where they had been living, and she would stay until he sent for her, but assured them she was as anxious to return as he was; they had neither of them been happy since they had left Guilford. Finally his eloquence and apparent sorrow for his great mistake won upon the hearts of the unsophisticated and kind-hearted people, and they again [permitted him] to supply the pulpit (as the phrase is) as long as they could agree to live together. Thus he went on for some weeks.

“He was a sensible man, and, your father said, of respectable talents. He had called to see us several times, and opened his heart freely, protesting that it was a deep sense of his sinfulness in leaving, for the hope of gain, the cause of his Blessed Master, whom he had promised to serve, that had made him wretched, and he could endure it no longer. We gave him full credit for the truth of these statements, and hoped they would get along happily. He then told us that he

should let his family stay where they were till winter, as it would be much easier moving them then, and in the meantime get a house ready for them. But, alas! the poor man had mistaken the state of affairs entirely. He received information that his wife had sold all their heavy furniture at auction, packed up the rest and hired teams to bring them to Guilford! This was a sad disappointment. No doubt the good man, worn out by her constant fretfulness and discontent, had planned a few months of rest and quiet. He received a letter from her begging him to meet her on the road, and help her along with the children, now six in number, as she was much fatigued. The people were kind, and helped him all they could, and found a house for him, although at a distance of a mile from his meeting house.

“He finally stayed with them till my Edward became anxious to fit for college, when I recollect going with your father to Guilford to prevail with Mr. Woolidge to take Edward as a scholar, which he did, and kept him some months. At that time their daughters, who were born while we lived there, were grown up young women. This, I recollect, was the summer before my Winship was born, (1818) and, while we lived in the Orchard House, as we called it, in this village (Brattleboro); since which time I have never heard anything in particular about the family; only the father left Guilford soon after this, and removed to the north part of

the state, and resumed the practice of law, until after we lived in this house, when he called here, and solicited your father to write him a recommendation to the bishop of one of the western states, as he was desirous of taking orders in the Episcopal Church. I believe it was to old Bishop Chase he wished the letter written; but your father positively refused to have anything more to do with him. Since which I do not recollect having heard anything about them. Only their daughters married. Their only son, a fine boy about twelve years old, was drowned at Guilford East Village, before they left. He was playing among other boys diving off the rocks near the church, when he sank and did not rise again. It was supposed he either struck his head against a rock, or was seized with cramp; at all events the body, when recovered, was lifeless.

“We will now return home to Guilford; scenes which seem to me like a dream, so far are they removed from my recollection. I soon became well acquainted with my neighbors, and, having been so well instructed in their various characters and interests, I was enabled to live among them six years without a word of difficulty or annoyance arising between us. I ever found them kind and respectful, devoted to your father and for his sake disposed to like me. Old Mrs. Peck and Mrs. Goodwin were truly like mothers to me ‘in sickness and in health.’ Old Aunt Chloe Peck was really a saint upon earth. She was lame, and unable to stand

to spin, so she used a little great-wheel, with which she could spin sitting down. She was also a very neat seamstress, and, I found, had made your father's shirts, and spun and knit his stockings before I came; and ever after I employed her to spin and knit, but the sewing I did myself.

"My family, when I first went there, consisted of your father, myself, my brother and little Royall, besides Molly in the kitchen. But we had been there but a short time before young John Tyler¹ came, and I was not a little surprised to find he brought me as a present from his grandmother, with her affectionate regards, two large china dishes, and a very large elegant English damask table cloth. This after all the past was a real balm to my feelings. There was no letter however, nor did she ever to my knowledge write to your father. He, however, insisted upon my writing by mail thanking her for the present, which I did, but never heard from her again.² John protested that she

¹ John Tyler was the son of Col. John Steele Tyler, Royall Tyler's brother, after whom Mary's second son was named.

² As Thomas Pickman Tyler points out, his mother is in error here—she has forgotten a letter which came this very summer from her husband's mother, and which deserves preservation as an example of an eighteenth-century gentlewoman's kakography:

"JAMAICA PLAINS, August 2 (1796).

"DEAR DAUGHTER,

"I received your two affectionate Letters, nothing gives me gratter pleassure then to hear from my dear Children, I would of answered your Letters, but had no opportunity, as the Coll' was with me, but one day, I want to see you and your Husband and Little Royall Very much, if the Distance was not but half the way, you should see me; but hope

charged him to give them to me with *her love* or I should have doubted greatly whether I was included in the gift. Your father, however, had no doubt of it and I thought was much gratified.

"In the spring, or rather summer, we wrote to my sister Betsey¹ to enquire if she thought she could ride on horseback to Vermont, if Hampden came for her, bringing horse and side-saddle; when we made the proposal we did not dare expect it to be complied with. I had never been on horseback till I came to Guilford, but your father had bought a beautiful side-saddle for me, the handsomest I ever saw, before or since, and a pacing white mare, very gentle and not very young, on purpose for me to ride, and I became quite an adroit rider; it was this horse, which was as easy as a cradle, that we intended to send for Betsey, although I knew

to se you all in the Winter at the Plains; my dear I am to thank you for the stockings you sent me, I would not have you trouble your Self to send me aney more Stokings, but if you can get me any of that nice Yarn, and send me. I will neett them my Self. I know send you a little robe for my grand son, it is the Newest faison for little Boyes, and a few Little things, which Polly has not finished as we had no Maid, she had not done. Polly Cook, your Niece, sends her Dutty to her Uncle and you, I have sent you some Edgin which was the best I could gett on the Plains, if there is anything I can due for you let me now it, and I will due it with pleassure, I am with my Prayers for your Health and Happiness your Affect.

Mother

MARY WHITWELL.

tell your Husband not to forgett the Butter. Miss Minots desire these Compliments to you and Mr. Tyler who they wish to se."

Elizabeth Palmer, afterwards Mrs. Nathaniel Peabody, whom her grandson, Julian Hawthorne, describes as "a gentle, ladylike person, highly cultivated, a student and most estimable character." (*Hawthorne and his Wife*, I, 46).

she had never been upon a horse. It was presumptuous to expect her to consent; nevertheless, I felt sure almost that she would, to see her little darling Royall whose wonderful progress in learning I had, motherlike, proclaimed in all my letters.

“And she did consent joyfully, so that she came and stood the journey bravely, and was with me to take care of the house and her pet, when our dear John was born the next September [1796]. It was customary then in Vermont to make quite a feast and frolic on the occasion of every addition to its sparse population, and it became necessary to have some lady to see that the feast was prepared and spread for the numerous guests which were invited. This was one reason why I wanted Betsey to come, and the little stranger was welcomed with all the honors he would have been, had we actually known what his character was to be, and how precious he was to be to us and how useful to the public. How well he has rewarded us for all our care of his infancy and youth, you all know full well; and of a truth I may reverse the good old saying and say, ‘The mother has lived to call you all blessed.’

“John Tyler lived with us a year or more when he grew disgusted with the study of law, and I believe your father found *two* such wild young men more than he could well endure. Although very indulgent to them in letting them use the horses to carry young ladies of the village about, yet several times he dis-

covered that they had left the house at unseasonable hours and taken them from the barn in the night and rode to some frolic in the neighboring village without any leave whatever. As he was very fond of his horses, he was quite out of patience, and no wonder. John was very glad to go back to Boston; but not to his father who was very indignant at his conduct, and told him he must take care of himself now, as he would do no more for him. At this John's wrath was excited and he resolved he would take care of himself, and, with this very laudable design, he went to a gentleman in Boston who had a wood wharf and asked for employment, was accepted, put on a frock and trousers such as teamsters wear and went to work with so much zeal and fidelity that he won the esteem and confidence of his employer, who advanced him after a time to offices of trust, and he finally, I believe, married his daughter and from that resolute beginning became, as you all know, a wealthy man. When he lived with me, he was so afraid of soiling his hands or losing caste that he was highly affronted if I asked him to help Hampden shake a carpet, weed the garden or bring in or cut wood at the door; so that we were astounded when we heard how industrious he had become.

"All this time I did not see my beloved father. Mr. Tyler saw him at times, when he attended court in Windham County; but this was only once or twice a year, and traveling was not then as it is now. My

father had a small school, or rather he taught the languages to a small number of boys in two or three families; and this work, while the pecuniary result was very small, kept him confined all the time. I heard of his health, and depended upon the circumstance of his being among your father's friends to hear if sickness or any other calamity befell him. My letters to him were few and far between, partly on account of the disorderly state of the postal accommodations, so that I rarely wrote to him or he to me, except when my husband's business called him to Woodstock or Windsor. I have only one of his letters written about this time. John was born September, 1796, and this is dated 1797, in March. The first few lines were only a recapitulation of sorrows which then marred our happiness, and still makes my heart ache whenever I think of them. My brother Edward had then come to Vermont and had been placed by your father with the printer in Brattleboro, to learn the business; and to this event my father alludes:

“Your husband's kindness to Edward shall make me forget my own sufferings, and fill my heart with grateful friendship for him. That I write the feelings of my heart I shall endeavour to convince him by a future letter. At present I have no time, 'tis now late in the afternoon and I have a mile to walk to the Post Office. I truly rejoice that my dear Edward has pitched upon a business so perfectly agreeable to my wishes. I hope

he will be a very good boy. I shall write him as soon as I find opportunity free of expense. Pray watch over him for his safety and honor. I still reside at Gen. Curtis', where I have everything convenient and agreeable, but alas! am in no way yet to assist your mama. My heart yearns to hear from her! My love to all who wish it. A large portion is due you from

'Your affectionate father,

'J. P. PALMER.'

WINDSOR, 20th of March, 1797.

"The sad death of this dear brother, who was one of the best of boys, you all have heard of. We were alarmed one Sunday morning by a man on horseback riding full speed down the high hill that, you all remember who have been in Guilford fronted, our house, and still more alarmed when he rode up our hill. Your father was not up. I went to the door and heard the dreadful message. My brother and Pardon Taylor, his particular friend, were in the Connecticut River. Every exertion was making to find the bodies, but as yet in vain. Mr. Richard Whitney had sent for your father to come with all speed. Of course he went on horseback. I could not leave my babe, now about eight months old. It was a sad day to me. Your father did not return till late, but many had gone from our village, so that I heard from him that the bodies had been recovered and every known method of resus-

citation tried in vain. Previous to this sad event, your father's friends from Brattleboro had visited me, and I them, but our acquaintance was very slight; but now the unbounded kindness and sympathy we received on this occasion was the commencement of an intimacy which nothing but death interrupted, between us and Dr. Hall's and Mr. Blake's families. After all hope was exhausted, Mr. Hall had the bodies taken to his house, and the funeral appointed from there the next day. Pardon Taylor was a clerk in Dr. Hall's store, and the printing office was in a room over that where Edward was at work. This proximity, added to the fact that Rev. Mr. Taylor, Pardon's father, was my husband's most intimate friend and enthusiastic admirer, made the two boys very friendly.

“It had been Edward's habit ever since he had been an apprentice, although he boarded with his master, to walk over to our house every Sunday morning, and spend the day and go to meeting with us; and on this fatal morning—a very hot morning in July—he arose early, prepared to take his usual walk, when, he met Richard Whitney in the street, who enquired where he was going and, being told his usual walk to Guilford, ‘Oh, my dear boy, it will never do in this extreme weather! Wait till after breakfast and you shall have my horse.’ Rejoiced at this chance, Edward joined a party of lads of his age and some older, and went to bathe in the Connecticut directly back of Dr. Hall's

store (now the site of the City Hall). Edward could not swim and for some time amused himself by wading and playing in the margin of the river till some of the boys laughed him into venturing farther and farther, till it is thought he stepped off some rock or ledge into deep water. They, for some seconds supposing him to be trying to swim, cheered him on till at last one young Eaton, who had just come out of the water, exclaimed with an oath, 'Why, Palmer has sunk!' and rushed back to his assistance. Edward, perceiving him, clung to him in such a way as to prevent his helping himself at all, and he screamed for help when Pardon Taylor, who had just dressed himself, flung off his clothes and plunged in to their aid. Edward, seeing him whom he loved so dearly, let go of Eaton and caught hold of Taylor, it is supposed in such a manner as to cripple him, and they both sunk together! And although by this time the whole village was alarmed, it was some time before either was found. Edward was found first and, as soon as possible, Richard Whitney sent a man on his horse to call your father. It was eleven o'clock before Pardon was found and most of the day was spent in vain endeavours to resuscitate them. This was a terrible blow to us all.¹ Edward

¹ Young David and Jonathan were not divided in death. Edward Palmer and Pardon Taylor sleep side by side under a double stone in the old cemetery on Prospect Hill above town and river. A funeral sermon preached at Brattleboro by Rev. William Wells the day after the drowning, July 3, 1797, was printed the next year.

was one of those amiable pleasant children who never seem to think any evil. But this was one of those awful bereavements where faith in the mercy of God, in Jesus Christ, is the only consolation for the survivors.

"I think it was the September after this that we were shocked by the news of the sudden and awful death of my beloved father¹; awful to us, but a blessed change for him, for if there was ever a truly humble Christian he was one, and, while my heart bled to think I should see his face no more, I rejoiced at his relief from such a complication of grief and misfortune to which I could see no relief in this world. My sister Betsey went home the winter before while it was good sleighing.

"Hampden was living with us, and bid fair to make a bright lawyer if he would apply himself and be steady; but he wanted a more strict and methodical master. His spirits were buoyant and led him into company not always desirable. There were two young men who opened a store at the foot of the great hill. About this time Tom Paine's *Age of Reason*² was published, and these young men brought a number into the village for sale. Hampden brought one home to me, perfectly

¹ Joseph Pearse Palmer was killed at Woodstock, Vt., by a fall from a new bridge, June 25, 1797, just a week before his son's drowning.

² Royall Tyler's literary partner, Joseph Dennie, described Tom Paine as "the loathsome Thomas Paine, a drunken atheist and scavenger of faction." Critics, even in our more tolerant age, object to "the unscholarly critical method and vulgar temper" of "The Age of Reason."

enchanted with it and left it for me to read, praising it very highly. Never having heard of it before and knowing the author's celebrity, as soon as I had leisure, I took it up and set down to read it. Happening to open at the pages where he blasphemously speaks of the birth of Christ, I flung the vile thing into the fire! When Hampden came home, he asked for his book. I told him what I had done and that I should do the same by any others that came into my house. 'Why, Mary,' says he, 'those gentlemen lent it to me and I promised to read it and bring it back.' 'And did you read it?' 'Yes, I did.' 'I am sorry to hear it, and, if you cultivate the acquaintance of such people, you will be ruined; how could you dare to ask me to read such a wicked production?' 'Why, I did not think it would hurt you to read it, and everybody reads it.' 'So those fellows tell you, but you are mistaken and so are they, and I wish you to tell them I have burnt it and shall burn any others that I find in my house.' 'They will be very angry at the loss of the book.' 'I am very angry at their giving it to you, it will do you more damage than you are aware of, and woe to him who imbibes the poison of such infidel works as that.' Hampden went out, and presently returned saying, 'They were very angry, and they say they will burn as many Bibles as you do of these books.'

"I am not sure that they did put their wicked threat into execution, I hope not for their sakes, but I never

saw any more of their books. No doubt if I had had my Amelia's wisdom and patience to talk calmly with my poor misguided brother, I should have done him more good, but my whole soul was grieved and shocked, and I vented my indignation without much reflection. But it was many years before Hampden recovered from the sad consequences of that book, which no doubt has ruined thousands. He became an avowed infidel; and it was not till much sorrow and affliction had humbled his heart, that he was brought to open his Bible, and after long study and research convinced himself of the Truth, a short time before his death.

"In the meantime, we had much trouble and vexation with him. While he was yet but a boy in years, perhaps eighteen, it became the fashion among the dandies to have their horses' tails cut very short, a fashion your father abominated, and had repeatedly refused, while young John Tyler was with us and afterwards, to have his horses deprived, as he said, of the benevolent provision of nature to defend them from their enemy, the fly. But one fatal morning he went out to the barn with Hampden to take care of his pets, Crock and Smut, when lo, Hampden had just been cutting their tails, although not to the extremity of the fashion, but sufficient to ruin the use for which it was made. I was seated by the fire in my room when I was alarmed by a rush and your father's raised voice; I sprang up, and at the same time the door flew open and Hampden

ran in pursued by my husband with a horsewhip. Hampden ran behind me, knowing the whip would not reach him there; he was half crying and pleading; perfectly horror struck, I begged to know what had happened but could get no answer, your father exclaiming, 'Come out here, you rascal, and get what you deserve.' Terrified, I pled with all my power to your father to have mercy and tell me what was the matter. In pity to me he answered and told me how it was. I do not recollect all that was said, but I remember I insisted upon Hampden's begging forgiveness, telling him how cruel I considered his conduct when he knew so well Mr. Tyler's peculiar dislike to the inhuman practice. He seemed properly humbled, professing to think he had not cut off enough to be noticed much, but was very sorry. Finally he was pardoned only for my sake and forbidden to use the horses for a length of time. This was the first time I had ever seen your father's temper roused, and it overcame me so much that he never let me see it again during our long life together.

"Ever after, he took another method to evince his displeasure at the rare intervals when it occurred, and I used to think it a far more trying one; this was *not to speak to me at all*, that is, when I was the culprit, even if ever so unintentionally; the first time I knew I had offended, was by a total neglect and silence, sometimes for days together, and, when the fit went off, his re-

doubled tenderness and attention gave evidence that he felt compunction. I made an invariable rule to receive his first advances with smiles, showing no resentment, asking no questions, but rejoicing in the restoration of peace and happiness. I never doubted I had been at fault some way or other, although often entirely unconsciously; at times I could recollect some hasty remark, or action, which I knew he did not approve, and would make all reasonable excuses, but, finding this unavailing, I ceased to say anything till he chose to be friends; in the meantime doing everything the most perfect love could suggest to please. At length something said or done in his presence would touch the right chord, and opening his arms, he would say, 'You are my only comfort,' with an emphasis and tenderness that healed my heartache, and we were friends again for a long time.

"Our dear little boys were the joy and delight of both. John, or, as we then called him, Jack, grew more and more to be his father's pet, proving the wonderful charm there is in the opening intellect, especially to parents. I had experienced this with my darling Royall, who was the most precocious of any of our children, partly perhaps because he was the pet of grandmother, mother and aunts, who were, some one, always talking to him, so that he could say many words plainly at seven months, and almost everything at a year old; but his father lost all that fascination and

never seemed to know how young he was, owing to this very precocity and expected too much of him. Now he saw the gradual unfolding of the intellect of Jack and had a proper estimate of his gradual advance in knowledge. He was a prodigy in size when three months old. About that time his father brought home our first family Bible; he had been absent at court and attending the state Legislature, and, when he came home after two months absence, he was astonished at the growth of the child, and with his usual facetiousness he exclaimed, 'Let us weigh him and the great Bible, and see which is the heaviest. Come Molly, bring the steelyards, and, Mama, do you tie up the baby in this silk handkerchief.' Accordingly this was done; the baby weighed seventeen pounds. Then the Bible was weighed. Only ten and a half pounds. There had been various guesses between Mrs. Ward, Molly, father and mother. I was in the minority for I had guessed the Bible was the heaviest, and the laugh was turned upon me.

"Colonel (John Steele) Tyler¹ came that summer to make us a visit; he was very kind to me. It was the first time I ever saw him, and he urged our visiting his

¹ Col. John Steele Tyler, Royall's elder brother, had served as secret agent in the Revolution, and later followed his father's business as Boston merchant. About this time he was manager of the Federal St. Theatre in Boston, where he brought out R. T.'s plays, "The Contrast" and "Georgia Spec," and used his prologues for occasional benefits. He died in 1813.

mother, but my husband pled business and bad roads in excuse.

"Your father finished 'The Algerine Captive'¹ and, by way of trying, like Molière, the worth of the work, he was in the habit of reading it, as he finished the chapters, to an old woman who lived with us as maid of all work; she was a woman who had seen better days and was quite intelligent. She had imbibed the common prejudices against the 'horrid Algerines' and felt greatly interested about Dr. Updike Underhill; had heard of people of that name in Rhode Island, and wondered if he ever got home, and understanding from your father's answer that he had, 'And he has got your honor to write his life and adventures?' Upon receiving what she took to be an affirmative, 'Well! I do hope he will come here while I stay; do you think he will?' 'It is quite doubtful,' said your father. 'Oh,

¹"The Algerine Captive," which was published by Royall Tyler in 1797, was on a timely theme, as the Moorish pirates of the Mediterranean were a constant menace to the vessels of both Europe and America. The black-pennanted pirate-ship, which captures the Yankee Doctor Updike Underhill, sails into the story, "impelled through the water with amazing velocity" at the very close of the first part, the earlier pages of which tell a story of American life not only in Puritan days, but in Underhill's own late eighteenth-century epoch. "The Algerine Captive" won an unprecedented international reputation, for it was the first American work of fiction reproduced in England. In 1802, five years after its first appearance at Walpole, N. H., it was printed in London and in 1804 ran as an illustrated serial in a British periodical, "The Lady's Magazine." In 1816 yet another edition was issued at Hartford, Conn. It won in Sept., 1803, favorable comment from "The Monthly Review" (London).

I do hope he will; but you will let me hear you read what you write, I know.' 'Certainly.' And, of course, every evening after her work was done, she would put on a clean white apron and her best cap, and come to see if he had any ready to read to her, and was greatly disappointed if he had not. She evidently believed it all true, and years afterwards I saw her, after she went to live with her married daughter. She asked us seriously if Dr. Underhill ever came to visit us.

"Perhaps now I had best tell you of my brother Hampden's adventures in the romance line. You who are the oldest have heard of Miss Polly Bigelow, Miss Tabby Goodwin, and Miss Betsey Peck from your facetious cousin, John Tyler, who never saw me in Boston without alluding to them. They were the belles of Guilford at that time, and, although not famous for beauty or accomplishments, were attractive enough to make that rattle-brained young man very unsteady and idle. Miss Bigelow's father was reputed quite wealthy for those days and therefore her bright black eyes and rosy cheeks led the beaux to be peculiarly attentive. Miss Goodwin was witty and smart, and Miss Peck quite a literary character and wrote poetry; so that sometimes one and sometimes the other were the objects of his devoirs. At length, one day he came to me with a pathetic story of a Miss Eliza Styles, granddaughter to old President Styles, long famous as president of New Haven College, and then but recently

deceased. This young lady, it seems, had recently come to Guilford seeking a school to teach. She represented herself as an orphan, left to the care of her uncle who had married, if I mistake not, her mother's sister, or else a sister of her father, a Miss Styles. His name has escaped me at this moment; I recollect now, Dr. Holmes, I think, of Cambridge.¹ This uncle, she said, had not treated her well, and she had come away determined to support herself. And now she was quite destitute and could not succeed as yet in obtaining a school. Hampden had seen her; she was then at Mrs. Peck's. They had consented to have her stay awhile but, says he, they cannot afford to keep her long; what will she do? Your father was present and with his usual benevolence says to me, 'My dear, we must invite her here till she can write to her friends, as I shall advise her doing immediately. I know Dr. Holmes well, and I am sure there is some mistake or misunderstanding.'

"Accordingly, Hampden was commissioned to invite her, and she came. We soon discovered from her manners, that there were probably good reasons why she was not a welcome inmate; she was highly sentimental, and disposed to display all she knew, with many supercilious airs, having acquired just knowledge enough to make her vain, without knowing anything

¹ The Rev. Abiel Holmes, father of Oliver Wendell Holmes, married, for his first wife, Mary, daughter of President Ezra Styles of Yale.

perfectly. She professed to be a good French scholar, but I several times tried to have her translate a French sentence for me, when they occurred in our reading, and found her not up to that. She tarried some days with us, when she had an invitation to teach as governess in the family of Mr. Melendy, who lived on what was called in Guilford the East Mountain, having a fine farm, and several children, boys and girls. She accepted at once; what he gave her I do not remember if I ever knew. She was there some weeks, and Crock or Smut had to travel those three or four miles as much as twice a week to enquire after the lady's health and gratify Hampden, who had become desperately enamoured of Miss Styles. She was, in fact, the most lady-like of any of the girls of his limited acquaintance, and had the art to make him think her very learned and accomplished; talked a great deal about her Grandfather Styles and Uncle Holmes, and some other learned relatives, so that he seemed perfectly fascinated with her society.

"He was quite literary himself, and, although very homely in the face, his form was perfect and manners genteel, while he had the art of making the best of what he knew, and had begun to make himself quite a name in the justice's courts where your father encouraged him to try his skill in managing, when there were only trifling disputes to be settled. I began very soon to feel quite uneasy at the way matters went on; and had

several serious conversations with him about the danger both to him and to her, in carrying on such an intimate and devoted attendance upon her. That something unpleasant existed between her and her guardian was evident. She did not let us see the letter she had obtained from him in answer to the one she wrote while at our house, but she told Hampden that he was pleased to hear she had employment. But nothing would convince him but what she was an abused individual. Your father laughed at my uneasiness but, to aid my views, he forbid the horses being kept out after nine. I have no doubt, however, that Hampden found the walk that distance very pleasant, as he was still out very late often. And you may imagine our consternation one Sunday after meeting, to hear Hampden and Miss Styles were *published* that morning. We were really distressed about it, and your father seriously offended, as well he might be, and forbid him the house unless the connection was immediately broken off. He talked like all romantic lovers about honor which only irritated Mr. Tyler the more; totally without any means of supporting himself, thus to engage himself to an utter stranger, without consulting his friends, knowing indeed our feelings for a long time about his visiting her. I could say nothing in his defence, but felt wretched that he could make such a return for all the favors he had received from your father.

“Finally we determined, your father and I, to have

our horses saddled and go to Mr. Melendy's and talk with Miss Styles herself, telling her the whole truth, and see if she had good sense enough to break the engagement herself. We went accordingly, and found her at first disposed to be offended at our expecting her to break *her faith*. Your father talked with her a long time, telling her among other things, that he should write immediately to her uncle and give him a faithful account of all we knew of her; of our willingness to befriend her all in our power, and how she had returned our friendship, and the utter hopelessness of the connection unless she had property, as Hampden had none. He was under age, without any means of support, and he was not far enough advanced in his studies to be admitted to the bar, nor would be for some months. Finally she wept, promised to do what was right, and hoped we would permit him to see her once more. Mr. Tyler told her he saw no benefit could arise from such a meeting unless she would promise it should be the last. She seemed sure that her uncle would consent to their union and gave us to understand that they would break off for the present, at least, and we left her. Mr. Tyler did as he said he would, and Dr. Holmes came up directly. He came to our house and dined, and expressed himself much obliged to us for the decided steps we had taken; was mortified and sorry she had caused us so much uneasiness; said she had given him much anxiety, but he would take her home once more,

and try what could be done with her. Accordingly, we suppose he did so; but the next we heard of her she was in Windsor, Vermont, trying to get a school.

“Hampden survived the affair very well, was more attentive to his studies, and at length was admitted to the bar, and then went to Woodstock (where his father died) and commenced practice. His popular manners and your father's influence gave him a good start, and after a few months, we heard of his marriage to a Miss Loomis of Thetford, daughter of one of the county judges and a very worthy man. She made him an excellent wife, but, alas, that bane of so many promising young men, love of company and consequent love of drink, was his ruin. He lived in that part of the country for some years, and afterwards removed to this county at Townsend, where he got some business. When he moved, he brought his wife and family to spend some days with us. I found her an energetic woman and very much attached to her husband. They had then Mary Eliza and Sarah Ann. While they lived at Townsend, they had a daughter Sophia, and a son born, who was a very fine child. As soon as the War of 1812 came on, poor Hampden became a violent politician, and nothing would do but he must enlist as a soldier. No doubt he felt discouraged, and conscious that his besetting sin had such a hold upon him, that, notwithstanding his excellent wife and all his friends used every argument to make him try and

become what he might be, one of the first lawyers in the state, he would not listen. And finally his wife, when she feared he would go, told him she would do all she could to maintain their children till his return, and had begun with all her energy to take in work of all kind with her needle, being ingenious as a milliner and dressmaker. Your father went to see her, and told her not to want for anything without calling upon us. But, in less than a week after her husband left her, he died at Windsor, on his way to join the army on Lake Champlain, with his company who had enlisted in Windham County. He was seized with typhus fever which was epidemic that season, and lived but a few days. The first news his wife had after he left was of his death.

“To return to my own story. Your father wrote about that time besides *The Algerine Captive*, *The Yankey in London*,¹ and many little *Tales for Children*.² These last were purloined by a dishonest publisher some years after, but the rough drafts of many of them are still in my possession. *The Algerine Captive*, and

¹ *The Yankey in London*, not published until 1809, a dozen years after *The Algerine Captive*, is, in its humorous exposition of English characteristics and customs, a remarkable *tour de force* from one who had never visited England.

² These stories entitled *Moral Tales for the Instruction of American Youth*, concerning which Royall Tyler carried on a vivid correspondence with Nancrede, a Boston publisher, include certain “fragments” now in the possession of the Tyler family, *Five Pumpkins*, *The Historiette of the Tub Woman*.

The Yankey in London were published both in this country and in London, and are now nearly out of print. I hope some of his sons will see their way clear to have all their father's works collected and published. I am greatly mistaken if they would not obtain a sum which would go far to render their sisters comfortably independent in their old age, an object well worth the trial.

“In June 23, 1798, our dear Mary was born, and was a precious gift, as she has ever been a treasure to us all. We now found our family cares increased and, as your father's profession led him away from home much of the time, the burden devolved mostly upon me. My neighbors were kind and attentive and our friends from Brattleboro occasionally visited us, and we sometimes took the baby and passed a night at Dr. Hall's and at Mr. Blake's occasionally; and thus, with literary pursuits and domestic comforts and pleasures, our time passed happily.

“Col. Tyler came at one time, I think while John was just beginning to walk about, and spent a summer with us. He visited us at other times, and he was always kind to me, and very fond of the children. His son Royall was then at Chesterfield Academy, which he left soon after, and soon after that went a voyage to sea with a friend of his father's. On the return passage the poor boy was washed or fell overboard in a gale and was lost. He was his father's darling, and a

remarkably fine boy; it almost broke the good man's heart, he was never himself afterwards. He took greatly to my John ever after, and, after his death, we permitted John to add the Steele to his name in respect to his memory.

"No event occurred of importance after this in our quiet life worth recording. Our children grew in health and beauty both of mind and body, and, as schools hereabouts were few and far between, I was their only teacher while we lived at Guilford. Royall was my joy and comfort; his early precocity continued. I scarcely knew how he learned to read. He was six years and three months old when we removed from there, and he was such a proficient child in Scripture lore before that time that old Mrs. Clough often told me with tears in her eyes: 'That child can tell me more about the Bible than ever I knew before.' It is true, this may prove her ignorance rather than his knowledge, but it is a fact that then, and ever during his childhood, he would often prefer reading with me to joining other children in their sports, whenever I had leisure. This, of course, endeared him greatly to his mother's heart, especially as he preferred the Bible to any other book. John was ever the pet of the family, his kind and affectionate disposition endeared him to all; especially was he his father's darling.

"About this time, my mother broke up at Framingham and went to Watertown, [winter of 1797-8] to her

mother, who then kept house with my two aunts, Kate and Sally. Aunt Kate and my mother soon opened a little shop, where they traded in English goods till my sister Kate grew up and married Henry Putnam, Esq.,¹ a promising young lawyer, who settled in Bangor, Maine, where Mother went also, dissolving partnership with Aunt Kate, and expending most of her gains in establishing the young people in their new home. Sophia, then about twelve years old (that is, when Mother left Framingham), came to live with us; my sister Kate who was then about five or six, perhaps eight years old [seven in 1798] tarried with her mother. George, who was nearly three years older, lived some time with old Uncle Cranch, father to the Chief Justice, but, not being contented, his mother got him an apprenticeship in Boston with some of her mercantile friends. Sophia was a beautiful child, and grew up one of those fascinating girls, whose company is coveted by all for sterling good sense and singleness of heart. But alas! such was our situation at the time, and no schools near to which we could send her, I was her only instructor; and being from infancy of an independent

¹ Catharine Hunt Palmer, named after "Aunt Kate," married at the age of sixteen (Sept. 13, 1807) Henry Putnam (1778-1827) of Boston. He was a Harvard graduate and a member of the Somerset Bar. In 1812, his failing health compelled him to give up the law in order to live in the open. He became a surveyor in Maine, and his wife established a school in Brunswick. Their son, George Palmer Putnam (1814-1872), was the founder of the publishing house of Putnam (now G. P. Putnam's Sons).

disposition, confident in her own opinions, she needed an instructor qualified to teach, to whom she would have looked with respect and confidence. I did as well as I could, but have always regretted that she was deprived of advantages so richly enjoyed by the children of this age. You all know, and love and honor her as she deserves.¹

“The monotony of our lives was varied and enlivened by the genuine spirit of hospitality inherent, I believe, in all new countries where caste is unknown, and neighbors are neighbors indeed. The winter season witnessed almost weekly a feast at some of the houses within our circle, when the supper table groaned with roast and boiled turkeys, roast goose, oysters in all forms of cookery, ham, tongue, pies, cakes, tea and coffee, and every kind of preserves; and most delicious fruit, pears and apples, grapes, strawberries, and each in their season; and after supper all kinds of rural sports, among the youthful part of the company; (for in those unsophisticated times, parents and children were invited together) and blind man’s buff, hunt the slipper and so forth were joined in by all except the very aged, who would, by their merry laughs, cheer and encourage their children of all ages. Thus in innocent merriment passed our winters, and every neighbor was eligible as a guest. In the summer, the farmers were always busy

¹ Sophia, who married (1815) Dr. Thomas Pickman of Salem, lived until 1862 (see Appendix).

by day and tired by night, so that our social tea drinkings seldom had any male guests except the master of the house where we met, or perhaps the physician, the minister, or the lawyer (your father) when at home. Thus passed the six years of my married life, happy and contented. One year we had a dancing master make his appearance in Guilford; that was the last winter [1800-1801] we passed there. It made quite a stir among the youths and damsels, and your father was solicited to subscribe, which he did, for Sophia and Rebecca Peck, who was living with us to assist me in tending baby, as I had my hands full with four babies, as it were, to take care of. Edward was born the August before, 1799 [1800]. The girls enjoyed the dancing school very much.

“It was the spring before this [1800] that, taking up a Boston paper one evening as we sat together in our little room, your father exclaimed, ‘Merciful God! My mother is dead!’ Springing from his seat, he paced the room for some minutes; then sitting down, he resumed his paper saying not another word. I was aware of making some exclamation when he announced the melancholy fact, but what I know not. He never mentioned it further, and, as a painful consciousness that, somehow or other, I had been the cause of separation between them sealed my lips, I, too, was silent. It proved that she was already buried, and they never sent him word about her last illness; but his brother had

written during the winter that her health was failing, and urging him to come and see her. This was no doubt the cause of his great shock. It was now too late. He had neglected a great duty. I felt deeply for him. His silence was more eloquent than many words. A few days later, he told me he must go to Boston; business called him. I knew it must be the settling of the estate, but I asked no questions. All I ever knew about it he told me voluntarily. He told me there was property in Boston belonging to him, which he had given to his mother's support during her life, which would now come to us."¹

¹ One is somewhat surprised that Madam Tyler, in her pleasant picture of life at Guilford, says nothing of the coterie of ladies and gentlemen, who composed the literary society which derived its name of "Colon and Spondee" from Royall Tyler's and his friend, Joseph Dennie's contributions to *The Farmers' Museum* of Walpole, N. H. To this well-known publication, several of the circle were contributors. But Mary Tyler's chief distinction was won in her home. Her husband wrote to her in 1801: "The Governor declared to a lady in W. that he was 'enchanted with your manners, that you were one of the most pleasing, agreeable women he ever knew;—that the regularity, economy and neatness of our house, table, etc., with the behavior of children and domestics, gave him a perfect picture of domestic peace and happiness.'"

CHAPTER IX

HAPPY DAYS IN BRATTLEBORO. (1801-1810)

Purchase of house and farm in Brattleboro—arrangement with the Pecks—the sick child and the difficult move from Guilford—settling in the new home—Royall Tyler's picture of farm-life—industries and occupations—friends and neighbors—rural beauty of Brattleboro. The unhappy dinner party. Family life—visitors from Boston and Watertown—the character of young Edward—the charm of Sophia—the coming of many children. Royall Tyler, author and jurist—"The Yankee in London"—the professorship at the University. Young Royall enters college. A flapper in early Brattleboro—the lively visit of Mary Cook—her strategy, flight and later history.

"My husband went to Boston in 1800, after his mother's death, and was there some time. When he returned, he brought three thousand dollars with him. Then he said, he meant to invest it in a house. Should it be in Guilford, or in Brattleboro? It was his wish to live in Brattleboro; then should he build or buy a house in the village, or should he purchase a house and farm in Brattleboro, which had been offered him very reasonable? I had little boys growing up; I dreaded bringing them up in such a village; besides, there was no house there to be had. One must be built, and I had a suspicion we should spend all the money before



The M. C. Tyler Home—Brattleboro, Vermont, from 1820-1866
Grandmother's Book was written in this house in the left-hand front room

it was done, as your father's business called him so much from home. The farm and house were ready. I went on my white mare to see it. There were apples, pears, peaches, strawberries and so forth for the little folks, and I voted for the farm; ignorantly thinking that one hired man could carry it on and it would yield food and some clothing, bread, butter, cheese. As it turned out, my ideas were rather extravagant. Nevertheless, the farm was bought, and in March, 1801, we moved into the house.

"It so happened that, about the same time we were bargaining for the farm, our neighbor Peck, an honest, industrious man, became much involved. He had built him a little cottage, containing a bedroom, sitting room, and kitchen below stairs, and a half story above, where the family slept, except Aunt Chloe who occupied the bedroom below, where she had her little great wheel, low chair, and work table, always as neat as possible. Here in this room your father and I used to sit usually when we called to see her. Small as was this house, and half finished, such was the cost of building in those days, the poor man could never clear it but was obliged to sell it to pay debts contracted in its erection.

"The end of this story is that your father felt so much compassion for this worthy but now distressed family, that he offered Mr. Peck the chance of taking our farm to the halves, as farmers call it; that is, he might occupy the farm house, about half way down the hill, and cul-

tivate the arable land, securing the hay, and crops and half for his care and labor. Your father was to stock the farm, which he did, purchasing of the former owner five cows, a yoke of oxen, and have the privilege of pasturing a cow; he was to raise flax, a share of which they had; but I, being seized with an idea of doing great things, chose to keep the dairy, spinning and weaving under my own care; which I did so long as we lived there. Mr. Peck was grateful for this opening in his time of trouble, and the family, greatly relieved, made instant preparation for moving. As this gave a prospect for Mr. Peck's being able to pay his little perplexing debts, his creditors agreed to let him rent his house and land, consisting of a large, well-cultivated garden, rather than, by a forced sale, sacrifice his all; so they did so.

"We all removed in March, 1801, just as a very hard winter was breaking up. My precious Mary, then nearly three years old, was dangerously sick with lung fever, and we had waited more than a week in hopes of her amendment. The sun shone hot; the snow-banks, four feet deep in the roads, were melting and running away in torrents. The head of the family of whom we had purchased, Col. [Micah] Townsend, who was an Englishman by birth and about to remove to Canada,¹

¹ Col. Townsend, a brave Revolutionary officer, and a man of distinction in the early history of Vermont, had owned this homestead for thirty years.

had agreed to take the house we were leaving till the roads should be so far settled as to permit of his traveling north; and their furniture was all packed to take advantage of our return teams, and we were all packed up ready to go, teams engaged, and fearful if we waited any longer the roads would be impassable. We, therefore, consulted our physician as to the possibility of taking our sick child out without too much risk. He hesitated but your father said, if it was not positively dangerous we must go on account of the other family. Major Houghton, one of our best friends, said he would come with his large sleigh and span of horses and drive us himself; so it was determined to go. I took our sick child, whose cheeks were crimson with fever, and who had not opened her eyes or shown any consciousness for some hours, in my lap on a pillow, wrapped in a blanket. Rebecca Peck went with us, carrying Edward, then six months old, and Sophia. Your father remained behind to assist loading up the goods, and then was coming in our own sleigh with the little boys. Thus we started, my heart trembling lest my child should die in my arms. The sun was actually hot; and Mr. Houghton took an untraveled road across by Madam Goodenough's, as the ground was bare in many places in the great road, making poor Mary groan going over the stones. The road we went was very sideling and dangerous, but we had an excellent driver and fine horses, so, by the blessing of Providence, we

arrived safe at our 'desired haven.' There we found everything in confusion; a sick child in a cradle in the north room, and Dr. Dickerman¹ leaning over it, evidently anxious.

"Mrs. Townsend made many apologies that the house was not ready to receive us. She, too, had a very sick child. She showed us into the south parlor, which was quite empty, and the floor had just been washed; there was a fire in the room in a large open fireplace; seeing the situation of my child, she invited me to sit down with her in the room where the doctor was. She introduced me to him, and, as soon as I could unbundle my child, I asked him what he thought of her and our running such a risk for her life. We found her, to our surprise, in a profuse perspiration, although her cheeks were still almost purple. The doctor smiled at my fears and said he did not think the ride such a fine day had done the least harm. He prescribed for her, and I asked him to call again and see her. As soon as the beds could be unloaded from Mr. Townsend's pile of things, they threw down on the floor a carpet folded, and a bed upon that, and there I laid Mary and she soon cooled off, slept several hours and, after her father arrived, awoke much better. After some time, Col. Townsend and family went away with their sick child, who looked as pale as Mary was flushed, and was much longer recovering.

¹ Dr. Lemuel Dickerman (1751-1832).

“It took as usual some weeks to get settled in our new home. Fortunately the carpet I had, fitted our best room pretty well, for carpets were rare things then and all my other floors had to go without for the present. After some years, I had a new one for the parlor and then my old one, nearly or quite twelve years old, mended nicely, afforded us the luxury of one upon our sitting room. But your father would always, when he was at home, make a study and sitting room of what we in courtesy called our parlor, because it was far from the noise of children, the pleasantest room, and because it had a carpet upon it. Some ladies may think they could not have agreed to that. But he was at home but a small part of the year, his profession calling him to attend the courts all over the state, and I was so glad to have him with us, that it compensated for many inconveniences. Besides, he always wanted me with him, partly for aid in his work, and partly for company, and the baby was no disturbance to him if it did not cry. Therefore if any friends called to see us, they knew what to expect.

“Mr. Peck’s family soon came, and proved good neighbors to us. They tarried with us about two years; but the same fatality attended his farming as had ever done his shoemaking—he apparently worked hard, but everything went wrong. The farm did not yield anything like enough for the two families; and one and another of his old creditors were constantly calling

upon him, so that I presume he sold what he ought to have kept for his own family to satisfy them. So true it is that 'the destruction of the poor is their poverty.' When your father came home, he found matters in such a state that he advised their going back to their house; and he hired Jabez Wood, who was our farmer for several years, till he got married. I missed our good Mother Peck and 'Becca,' as we called her, who always was ready to come and tend upon the children whenever I wanted her."

The Brattleboro house and farm are described with illuminating detail by Royall Tyler in a letter to a friend, written March 18, 1801, a fortnight after the migration from Guilford. This sketch is reproduced here¹ not only as a companion piece to Madam Tyler's recollections of nearly sixty years later but as a vivid contemporaneous picture of domestic background in Vermont in the first year of the nineteenth century.

"BRATTLEBOROUGH, March 18, 1801.

["Here we are in quiet and complete possession of our new farm on the hill where was built the first meeting-house in this town, after a most fatiguing fortnight of moving, and, to add to our fatigue, the baby and little Mary have both been very sick. The latter was so indisposed, when we removed, that it was thought to

¹ Judge Tyler's letter has already been printed in Burnham's sketch, *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, V, 97, and in Mary K. Cabot's *Annals of Brattleboro*, 1921, I, 265-267.

be accompanied by some *risque*, even by her physician, but the earnest wish of all the family, and the dread of the snow leaving us, overcame all apprehensions, and, on the 3d inst., we came here bag and baggage. The children are now so far recovered as to allow us, for the first time, to hunt up our writing materials and address a line to you, who, next to ourselves, we apprehend will enter most fully into our enjoyments. If I had Sophia's tongue or Mary's enthusiasm, I might give you a description of this farm in some measure equal to their ideas of it; but as the purchasing of the farm is entirely Mary's, and I have some fears of our success in yeomanry, I cannot write with the spirit, the subject, they suppose, merits; so you will look for the raptures and the beauties from them, while I detail you a little homespun fact. The farm we have purchased is in a retired spot upon the brow of a large hill, about one mile as the road goes, from [West] Brattleborough meeting house, though we have a shorter cut through our own grounds, which reduces the distance half. The farm consists of about 150 acres, the greatest part of which—indeed, upward of an 100 acres—is well fenced and under good improvement. We have wheat and rye now in the ground, springing up as the snow leaves it, and promising a sufficiency of those grains for our bread and pies. We have two large orchards, and two smaller ones coming on, and expect to make some fifty or sixty barrels of cider; and, in a few years—as the orchards

are young and thrifty—we may reasonably expect to make 100 barrels per year. We have plenty of good pasturing and expect to cut enough hay to winter thirty head of cattle. Our neighbor, Mr. Peck, takes the farm, at present, at halves and, with his family, has removed to our farmhouse, about a quarter of a mile from us.

“Mrs. Peck is an excellent dairywoman and he is a regular farmer. He has a hired man with him and I have hired a young man, active and stout, who in busy seasons will assist Mr. Peck, so that, without reckoning boys and extra help, we shall always have three stout men for farming work. With the farm we purchased farming tools, young cattle, hogs, poultry and twenty-three sheep, who have now increased the flock by eight lambs; and it would amuse you to see Sophia and the children surrounded with sheep, lambs, geese, turkeys and hens, feeding them from their hands. The house is entirely secluded from a view of any neighbors; though on the crown of a hill it is yet in a hollow, but the necessary buildings around it give it the air of being a little neighborhood; a large barn and shed, corn-barn, chaise-house, smoke-house, ash-house, etc. The house is somewhat similar to Judge Jones', in Hinsdale, which I think you observed, an upright part with a handsome portico, two handsome front rooms, well finished, papered and painted; and two handsome chambers over them; back, is a sitting-room and by the side of it

a room for my office, which has a door into the sitting room and another out of doors, so that ingress may be had independent of the house; back of the sitting-room a good kitchen; from whence you go into two bedrooms, one for the boys and the other for the maids, and overhead a meal granary, and over the sitting-room an apartment for our hired man and boy; back of the kitchen is a long wood-house, about twenty feet of which makes a summer wash-room, and here stands the water-trough, constantly supplied with plenty of excellent water.

“In front of the house, is a fruit-garden, peaches, plums, etc., but the former will not bear until next year. On one side of the house is a kitchen garden, with a good asparagus bed and plenty of currants, red, white, and black, and large English gooseberries, on the other side is a flower garden. Next the house runs a small brook, on the other side of which is a grass plot set out with young fruit trees, chiefly plums. We have on the place a plenty of common cherry trees and four fine blackheart cherry trees near the front windows. We have also pear trees which bear, and quince bushes. On the place we may gather cartloads of chestnuts, no walnuts, but a sufficiency of butternuts. In a word, if one can love a retired farmer's life, here you may have it to perfection. For all we live down, or rather up a lane, you will scarcely see three persons pass in as many days. We cannot see a single house, even

from our chamber windows, not even our farm-house, but that is prettily situated; there you may see perhaps thirty houses, and, if we climb our orchard, we can see the country thirty miles around. I think this place may be made comfortable and even pleasing, but the house can never be made to look handsome, that is, on the outside; within, to be sure, if we shut the windows, or look into the garden, it does tolerably, but the house is in a hollow, and a house in a hole cannot look well from abroad, but then it is a home and has a thousand pleasant things, fruitful fields, and delicious fruits about, thrown together higgledy, piggledy.¹"]

"All this time my dairy and spinning wheels were busily attended, in your father's absence, by myself, with the assistance of one and at times two girls. Our sheep furnished wool, and we raised flax. I spun all the thread I used for years, whitening some, and coloring some, and some keeping flax color. I hired a girl to spin that I wanted wove, and the tow also, with which we made cloth for sheets and common table linen. Mrs. Peck could weave a very nice diaper, which we bleached at home. After she left us, Mrs. Fisher did my weaving, but having to give nine pence

¹ The house, which the Tylers purchased from Micah Townshend on coming to Brattleboro, was built by Dr. Henry Wells a third of a century before. It was occupied by the Tyler family for only fifteen years, but stood almost unaltered until 1875 when it was taken down. See Martha Votey Smith's sketch of this homestead in her paper "On Meeting House Hill," *The Vermonter*, vol. 26, pages 22-25.

a yard for weaving, I suggested to your father the expediency of getting a loom, and having our flax and wool wove in the house. Ever ready to comply with my wishes, he got one immediately, and for twelve or fifteen years we made the children's clothes summer and winter for common wear. Occasionally we added a piece of what was called woolen sheeting for the children's beds; this was cotton warp filled with wool, and made excellent sheets for winter; it was wove thin, and being very white was nice. I have now in the house the remains of two pairs of blankets I spun all myself, and had them wove in the house, a yard and half quarter wide, being the capacity of our loom, intending to have them fulled at the mill and dressed so as to have two breadths in a blanket for the width; but, lo, when it came home, the clothier had fulled it so much that I was obliged to sacrifice one blanket to make the other three good for anything as bed blankets, and spoiling the look of them. They were very thick, white, and a fine nap upon them, but I was sadly disappointed. They have worn, however, fifty years, and now only serve to remind me of old times. The farmers' wives gave me credit for making excellent cheese and butter, but we did not have cows enough to shine in that way. Sophia grew up a very useful as well as a very lovely girl, and assisted me greatly with her needle and in taking care of the children. She early showed a taste for drawing, especially for

taking likenesses. The first likeness she attempted was my little Amelia, but this was some years after this time.

“After we came to Brattleboro, we never had but one dinner party, a real dinner party, [summer of 1801.] And as it was a great trial, I never would attempt it again. And no one should who had such servants, or rather no servants, as we had. But we had been invited several times to Dr. Hall’s¹ and Mr. Blake’s,² and one time Mr. Frederick Geer and Mr. Charles Storer came visiting Mr. Blake from Walpole—where Mr. Geer then resided—and we had been invited first to Mr. Blake’s and then to Dr. Hall’s to dine and spend the evening with them. My Edward was a babe nine or ten months old and quite a troublesome child from his uncommon fondness for me, so that he was never easy if he knew I was at home, although he was very good when he knew I was away, as all the girls testified. Mr. Geer and Mr. Storer would remain in town but one day more after the one we had spent at Dr. Hall’s, where they had everything elegant and excellent, and where they had been invited and expected for some days.

“Mrs. Hall was a lovely woman, habituated to enter-

¹ George Holmes Hall (1763-1807) was the first resident physician in East village, and had also a store for sale of drugs, hardware and groceries.

² John Welland Blake (1759-1818), one of the foremost lawyers of Southern Vermont.

taining company; add to this my entire ignorance of the matter from the retired life I had always led, with no one in my house but ignorant country girls who knew not even how to set a table in decent fashion; my want of everything stylish for a table and so forth, and you, my dear daughters, may form some idea of my consternation when your father invited those strangers, and Mr. and Mrs. Blake, Dr. Hall and lady, and Misses Nancy and Sally Hall, sisters of the Dr., and Richard Whitney¹ to dine with us the next day!! We had turkeys, ducks, and chickens running about the yard, but no market to go to for anything. Mrs. Hall saw at once my dismay, and soon after took me out into another room and told me that anything she had was at my service. Your father followed us soon, and, having been long acquainted with her, at once spoke confidentially to her accepting her offer, telling her frankly how ignorant his wife was about entertaining company, and borrowing from her everything we lacked at home, in sufficient quantities for so many guests, plates, dishes, knives, forks and glasses, to which she added some nice cake for tea, which she had and could spare perfectly well. Accordingly, she went to work and packed a large basket with everything she knew I should want on such short notice, for in those days two o'clock was a late dinner hour.

¹ Richard Whitney (1776-1815) was at this time a lawyer in Brattleboro and a man of literary gifts.

"You may be sure this considerate kindness in Mrs. Hall was a great relief to my mind; but still there was much for me to do. And I told your father we must go home in good season, for our turkeys and ducks must be killed and picked, dressed and ready for cooking before our family went to rest; nevertheless, a game of whist must be played, and it was quite late before we reached home. We mustered the man and boys and lanterns and sent them to the barn to kill two turkeys, a pair of ducks and chickens, and, after unloading our chaise with care of the basket of precious things we had borrowed, sent the girls to bed telling them what was to happen the next day, and they must be up bright and early for there was much to be done; cleaning house, cooking and so forth to receive the strangers, and have dinner in proper season. My darling Edward was awake, and as glad to see his mother as she was to see him; but he behaved very badly the next day, having no conception why he should be turned off to Sophia's care, nor was she any more pleased to be confined to him after the company arrived; but I am getting before my story.

"I succeeded in getting a woman, who was a tolerable cook, to come and assist about the dinner; but we had all the poultry to prepare; pies and puddings to make besides putting the house in order, which was no small job, since we had but two decent rooms, and always went upon the principle—when your father was at

home especially—to take our comfort all over the humble domicile; so that every part was pretty much alike, for we saw very little company up that hill. Edward kept up a continual cry all day every time he caught a glimpse of me, and at last I was obliged to send for Rebecca Peck to come, as Sophia got wearied out with him. She succeeded better for a while, taking him out to walk. OH! what would I not have given then if I might be excused from doing the honors, and have taken my babe away to the farthest corner of the house! But this could not be.

“I must be dressed to receive them. Your father was naturally anxious that I should look and behave well on the occasion, unconscious, as most men are, how very difficult it is to discharge the antagonistic offices of maid and mistress at the same time with due propriety and discretion. After the people had all assembled, and I had set with them a few minutes in our south room, which was our parlor, Sophia, then fourteen, who had been dressing herself and the children, came into the room, leading little Mary, now a little more than three years old. Nancy Hall sat next to me, and exclaimed, ‘Why, Mrs. Tyler, who is that beautiful girl?’ I turned and said, ‘That is my sister, Sophia Palmer,’ and introduced her to the company. She was rather shy, very little used to company, but she acquitted herself very well. She had a profusion of beautiful brown hair, which hung in rich curls, as

Gertrude's used to do, and she really did look beautiful. It was the beginning of pleasant times for Sophia, for she soon became a great favorite among our friends in the village. Her eccentricities seemed to be her great attraction.

"But to return to my dinner. It should have been ready at two, but it was just three ere it got on the table. We had a roast and a boiled turkey, a fine ham, roast chickens, and a pair of very fine ducks, oyster sauce and cranberries. Then for dessert, nuts and apples. I do not remember all. It was nearly night when we rose from the table; but, with our borrowed plumes, we made out pretty well. I had Hannah Bardwell, sister of Eliza, living with me, as a spinning girl, and like Eliza she was very good about waiting upon the table, as far as she knew how. She and Molly Clough did pretty well; and the ladies, especially Mrs. Hall and Nancy, were very kind in assisting me; and your father was a host in himself in more senses than one, and, by his flow of wit and humor, literally 'kept the table in a roar,' so I presume they did not notice my awkward blunders. My great trouble was that my poor baby cried all the time we were at dinner; Sophia and Becca Peck were devoted to him, but all in vain; your father joined me heartily in my determination never to have another dinner party when there was a baby in the house. There were two or three other girls in the kitchen who occasionally took him, and among

them all lay the awful sin of abusing the poor child. When I went to take him after dinner, I found both his little arms were pinched black and blue from his elbow to his wrists. This accounted for much of his crying, so unusual for him; no doubt some of the girls were weary and out of patience tending him, and hoped to oblige me to come out. It was impossible, and only after dinner did I suspect such doings. My annoyance during dinner was terrible, to say nothing of your poor father and the other guests, who could more easily sympathize with me and the child, having children of their own. In vain I sent repeated directions and entreaties to have him carried out of hearing somewhere. I was obeyed for a few moments, and then again—but enough of this. It distresses me to think of it even to this day. It was one of the dark days of my life.

“I expected your father would blame me, and dreaded that as much as anything; but he was so generous seeing my feelings, that he never alluded to it, except playfully; and our guests *professed* to have enjoyed their visit. And as Mr. Geer and Storer were to leave town very early in the morning in the stage, they all declined spending the evening and took their leave early; your father going to take tea with them in the village. I was invited but declined, rejoicing to rest after such a fatiguing day. No doubt your father repented having asked them to come, but he never said so, lest it should imply dissatisfaction. He stayed late with his friends.

I always sat up for him when I knew he would come. All the family were in bed, but myself and babe, and the man in the kitchen who waited to take care of the horse. Your father entered in fine spirits, saying our guests were all much pleased with their visit and *with me*. I believed as much as I could, and loved my husband for his considerate forbearance. That Mr. Storer was the very man who, many years before, had brought to your father that voluminous package from Miss Adams, when in an evil hour *for her* she saw fit to break their engagement. This no doubt made your father a little more anxious that his wife and children should appear as well as possible. Our two little boys Royall and Jack (as he was then called), and little Mary, any father might well have been proud of. We will not vouch for his wife, but he *professed* entire satisfaction and I was happy. This was the first and last time we attempted a dinner party, but contented ourselves with social tea parties with our intimate friends; there were but few in those days, and we could enjoy them without perplexity or more expense than we could afford, and in that way we avoided much unhappiness.

“I recollect your father took me, in the course of that summer, to walk over our hills and pastures; and, when we got up on the rocks in the sheep pasture, as it was called, we sat down and he said, ‘There, my love, here we are lords of all we behold!’ Which was a fact,

so far as our eyes could see where we sat was ours. It was a beautiful day, and a fine season; apples, peaches and plums were promising rich rewards for the provident care of our predecessor. He had cultivated the place well. And as I *then* supposed it all *paid for*, I felt happy in its possession.

“Year after year rolled on, and perhaps few families enjoyed more true happiness. Col. Tyler came to see us that first summer, [1801] and was much pleased with the place. Our nearest neighbors were a quarter of a mile from us. Farmers as we were, we lived in amity and friendship, although no very great intimacy. Our children grew in stature and intelligence.

“Sophia, who was now nearly or quite fifteen, soon found friends in this village. Abby Chapin, now Mrs. Harris, and Susan Whitney (Mrs. Grindall Ellis afterwards and eldest daughter of Lemuel Whitney, Esq.,¹) became very intimate friends with her. They frequently visited her, and she often spent several days at a time with each of them and also with Sally Hall, youngest sister of Dr. Hall, who, with her father and elder sister, occupied the house lately pulled down, so long known by us all since as Dr. Dickerman’s old house. Directly at the foot of the hill now leading up into High Street, making the corner, was Dr. Hall’s house, and he had a beautiful garden reaching up to

¹ Judge Lemuel Whitney (1764–1857) was prominent as town representative and judge of probate.

the grove of trees now owned by Judge [Daniel] Kellogg, which was terraced and elegantly cultivated, with flights of steps from one level to the other. Fruit trees of all kinds the country produces, and currants, gooseberries, and strawberries in great abundance; and flowers of every variety—the handsomest tulips I ever saw anywhere.¹

“At the time I now write about, our village was famous for its rural beauty. The hill, now covered by the tombs of most of those who then lived here, was a dense forest, both sides of the road leading to Guilford; which road was so encumbered by stumps and stones, or rather rocks, that for several years your father and I rode on horseback whenever we visited here, and were never weary of lingering when we first came in sight of the village, admiring the lovely prospect. When the first inhabitants settled here, the only thought was to clear away the forest around Whetstone Brook and erect their dwellings, and have fields to cultivate for food and shelter. So they left few trees for ornament, and, when Lombardy poplars were introduced, and more refined minds succeeded the first settlers, they found the houses bereft of shade, and, as those trees grew rapidly and their spiral forms, so different from the native forest trees, had all the charm of novelty,

¹ Madame Tyler's enumeration of “all the dwelling houses of note in this place,” which has been very properly included in Mary^e K. Cabot's *Annals of Brattleboro*, I, 280, has been omitted as its interest is entirely local.

every gentleman of taste had united in setting them out each side of the road, so that from Cemetery Hill the village looked beautifully, with its little white cottages scattered sparsely among those towering trees, backed in the distance by the primeval forest. This was long before we removed to Brattleboro. In the meantime, there was quite a rush of new inhabitants, who soon spoiled its rural beauty by building, opening stores and so forth, so that, when we did come into town, the usual village jealousy had sprung up between this and the West village, so that I was told 'how proud the city folks were,' a cognomen and character I presume we are still honored with by many of the ancient inhabitants a few miles west of us.

"It is now time to return to my home. I have aimed to give you some idea of this home where I spent the happiest fifteen years of my life, while your father lived and enjoyed his health. Soon after we were well settled, your Uncle John came and made us a visit, which he repeated several times before his death, and became much attached to our little Jack. My mother also came to see us in the summer of 1802, the same year you, my dear William, were born. She enjoyed our rural retreat very much, and tarried as long as she could be spared from her business in Watertown. I now found my hands and heart full, four babies almost. My mother was quite unhappy about Edward, then about two years old, and then fast

developing his characteristic energy of will. He did not like to resign his place as my pet to the new baby, and poor Grandma had a great deal of trouble to keep him out of my room the first week. She would hear him coming up stairs, and spring to stop his entering if possible, for, once within the room, he would run and climb into my bed with the activity of a kitten. If Grandma could stop him, she would catch him up in her arms, tell him Mamma was sick, and he must not come in, and carry him down to the kitchen; but before she could retrace her steps, he would be up the backstairs and at my door, thumping with all his might, crying, 'I will see my mamma, I won't make her sick,' till at last I was obliged to beg Grandma to let him come, as he promised to be good, and be quite still; this made her fear I should never be able to govern him. After she went home, she wrote me a letter of several pages, cautioning me not to spoil that child, as his temper was very obstinate; this was true in a degree, but I never had a more obedient or affectionate child. He required very peculiar discipline; his innate hatred of slavery,¹ I believe, began to operate very young, and too rigid treatment would have ruined him. You all remember him, and can testify to the sterling worth of his character.

"About this time [1809] your father wrote *The Yankey in London*, a work full of wit and talent, which com-

¹ See Appendix B.

pletely deceived old Dr. Wells¹ as to its authorship. We were visiting at his house some time after its publication, and, while talking upon literary subjects with your father, he said, 'By the way, Judge, have you read a little work lately published, said to be written by an American in London? A capital thing; he has hit off the English Parliament to the life.' 'What is it called?' asked your father. '*The Yankey in London*,' said the old gentleman laughing, 'have you seen it?' My heart beat at this; what would he say, I thought; but with the utmost composure he said, 'Oh, yes, what do you think, sir, of its merits? You can judge better than we can who have never been there.' 'I think no doubt the young man has been there and seen and heard what he vouches for, and he has described many things very graphically. I should like to know who he is.' Much more was said. It was wonderful to me how your father could keep his secret so well; I had to turn away and talk with the ladies, lest my countenance should betray me. Some time afterwards the good old doctor called and had a hearty laugh with us about it, protesting that he had no suspicion but what it was a genuine traveller's story. Thus months and years passed away, with alternate seasons of industry and literary occupations.

"When your father was absent on his professional

¹ Rev. William Wells, born in Bedfordshire, England, 1744, was pastor of the First Church of Brattleboro, 1794-1814. He died in 1827.

duties, I took the opportunity to busy myself about home. What with my dairy in summer and seeing to the spinning and weaving in winter, and the care of five children by this time, I never realized what it was to have time hang heavy. Sophia had now become of great use and comfort to me, in helping teach and tend the little ones. And it has ever been a painful recollection to me, and was to my husband, that we had it not in our power to give her such advantages of education as she ought to have had; but there were no young ladies' schools here then, and we could not afford to send her from home. Nevertheless, she grew up lovely and beloved by all her young friends, and was courted by the best of society our country afforded. Your father occasionally took her with him on his journeys and she became a great favorite wherever she was known; her peculiar naïveté and sincerity of character charmed everybody.

“The few months which your father passed with us, were settled by law. In August his circuit for the summer terms of the courts began at New Fane [New-fane] and continued up this side of the mountains, till he reached the upper county in the state in September. The Legislature sat in October, after which he came home and remained till December when he was obliged to travel quite up to St. Albans. This was the regular routine of our lives, from the time he was first chosen Judge of the Supreme Court, for fifteen years in suc-

cession; as for dates I am not sure, having no records to refer to but the births of my children. I think it was in October, 1803, [1801] he was first elected, when William was about two months old; which summer mother spent with us. Politics ran very high then in those days. Your father called himself a Federalist and Mother was a Whig, and such disputes as they would have were a caution. The court sat in August, and although not yet a judge, your father rejoiced at the chance of leaving home on her account. I had such a dose of politics then as disgusted me for several years with the name; and now I see the same bitter feelings agitating the country, only still more intense.¹ What will be the end? Must this glorious country be sacrificed to the evil tempers of her own children? Our hope is in a righteous God, who once said, 'If there are ten righteous in the city, I will not destroy it for the ten's sake.'

"Years sped on; my children grew up around me, lovely and beloved. Joseph, Amelia and George, were next added to our stock of treasures. Royall and Jack had grown old enough to go to the Academy; the little ones, Edward, William, Joseph, Amelia, George, and Mary, Aunt Sophy taught, till they were able to go to the red schoolhouse. One summer my brother George² was so much out of health that we invited him

¹ Madam Tyler is writing her later pages during the Civil War.

² Of George Palmer, his niece, Mrs. Nathaniel Hawthorne, Elizabeth Palmer's daughter, gives a pleasant picture (*J. Hawthorne, Hawthorne and his Wife* I, 54).

to spend the summer with us. And no doubt you, my dear John, remember the pleasant time you and Royall had roaming the fields and hills for berries, and hunting with your little gun, which was your pet for many years. Sometimes my mother and sisters visited me and thus years sped away.

“In the year 1805, my husband was chosen one of the side judges of the Supreme Court of Vermont,¹ and ever after that, till he left the bench in 1813, he was absent from home most of the year, attending the courts, and all the care of family affairs devolved upon me. He settled up all accounts when his yearly salary was paid, and we lived happy and contented all those years. While George was an infant, your father spent all the leisure he had writing law reports, which were published (1809) through the agency of Holbrook and Fessenden, who were then the booksellers of our village. About this time, your father was chosen Law Professor of the University of Vermont, recently organized, and he began to think of preparing his two oldest boys to enter that institution. They had begun their Latin at the Academy, but now Royall was placed under the instruction of Rev. Mr. [Jason] Chamberlain of Guilford, successor of Mr. Woolidge [in 1807]. We put him to board with our old friends, the Pecks, and, when he had completed his studies ready for college, through

¹ Father was elected 1st Assistant Judge of the Supreme Court, October, 1801; Chief Justice, October, 1807. T. P. T.

your father's influence the Rev. Mr. Chamberlain was elected Professor of Divinity [Languages] at Burlington, and Royall entered freshman there, I think at the commencement in 1809 [1811], but am not sure as to the date.

"Somewhere about this time [1803] we received a letter from our brother, Col. Tyler, saying he was troubled about his niece Mary Cook, the daughter of his sister who died when Mary was an infant. While her grandmother lived, the child had been under her care, but now was grown up a beautiful girl, between eighteen and twenty; highly romantic, fascinated with theatricals, and he feared she would finally become an actress, if she was not removed from the city. This letter was accompanied by one from the young lady to her uncle and me, professing a great desire to live with us, wishing to have a home in our family. My husband had but two sisters, Jane and Mary; Jane was the eldest; they were both beautiful and highly accomplished for that day. Their history was singular, and this may be a good place to tell all I know about them; they were both dead before I knew your father. I believe their order of birth was this: Jane, first born, then John, then Mary and then Royall, or, as he was baptized, William Clark, being named for a particular friend of the family. After his father's death, as you have heard, his name was altered by the general court. When Jane was grown up, she became a great favorite, quite a belle, owing to her wit and beauty.

"It was then, as now, a favorite amusement to sail from island to island in the beautiful bay [Boston Harbour]. One day, a party was formed for such an excursion; Jane was one. They had a fine time till towards evening, when a sudden change took place; a storm arose, and filled their little boat almost with water. The ladies sat knee-deep sometimes. At length, they arrived safely at home, but Jane never recovered the use of her limbs. After a lingering and painful illness she recovered her health otherwise, but she never could walk. Such was her brilliancy, and the fascination of her manners, however, that my mother told me, she had many admirers, and finally married a Capt. Cook, who left her a widow with two children, Mary and Horatio Cook. Her poor sister Mary fell a victim to the same amusement, when only eighteen. She, too, joined a party down to Fort Independence, and was caught in a squall on their return, and, like her sister, got very wet, and chilled with cold, took immediately to her bed and died with rheumatic fever.

"To return to the daughter of Jane. She pled so hard to come to us, and her Uncle John was so anxious for it, that your father said there was no help for it, she must come. This was in the autumn and your father sent his horse and chaise for her, but his business called him away from home before she came, so I had to receive her. She came with trunks and so forth, evi-

dently expecting to make it her home. I received her kindly, although past reminiscences were not calculated to make me feel the cordiality I ought to have felt for the orphan child of my husband's sister. She was tall and finely formed, and by many thought handsome. She appeared delighted with the country and professed great pleasure at the prospect of becoming one of our family; said she had never felt at home since her grandmother died. She had lived about with the Whitwell family and their connections, the Waters', some of whom I knew personally. She had now come from a Mrs. Waters, for whom she expressed much affection, and with whom she kept up a voluminous correspondence, always excusing herself from reading any of the letters to me, under the idea that I was not acquainted with her. She often appeared so excited and so delighted with her letters, that I would say, 'Why, Mary, I think you ought to read me some of what delights you so much; I read your uncle's letters to you.' 'Oh, Aunt, you would not enjoy them, because you do not know the people'; and hastened to conceal them as if she feared I should insist—a thing I never thought of, supposing they were girl's chit chat, and having little curiosity and no suspicion of evil in any way.

"This went on three or four weeks perhaps. In the meantime, Sophia's young friends, Miss Chapin, Miss Whitney (the Judge's daughter, afterwards Mrs.

Grindall Ellis), Miss Hall and so on, called upon her and invited her to visit them. Everyone was charmed, such was the elegance and fascination of her manner; but I have reason to suspect the comparative rusticity of Brattleboro society afforded rich material for her letters to Boston. At length, within six weeks after her residence with us, she received a letter, *as she said*, from Mrs. Waters, inviting her to return to Boston and spend the theatrical season with her, as the then famous tragedian Cooper was to be there, and other famous actors. She was all in raptures at the prospect, and begged me not to oppose it, her friends would be so disappointed if she did not go. She told me this, but did not let me see the letter. I told her what her Uncle John had written to my husband respecting their (her friends') anxiety to remove her from this excitement, and my belief that her uncles would not approve of her returning; especially would her Uncle Royall feel hurt if she went before he returned, which would be the last of October, or first of November. Oh, she must go before that time, as some play was to be performed that she wanted so much to see. I asked her if her Uncle John knew of the invitation. Oh, no! it was her dear friend Mrs. Waters invited her and would send for her, if I would only give my permission. Your father was then at Windsor county or the next county above, and I could only tell her I would write him about it, but it would take several days to obtain

an answer. Oh, that would never do; she must send her answer by return of mail! I wrote, however, to her uncle and told her definitely that I could not give my consent to such a wild scheme, till I heard from her uncle, who had put himself to such inconvenience to send for her, and it would not be using him with proper respect to leave his house without his knowledge even, and I was sure he would be sorry to have her go. Well! she should be sorry not to *see him*, but did not know what harm there could be in her going, when her friends were so urgent and would bear all the expense!

“All this I wrote to your father. And she wrote her letters, but I never saw what she wrote. All her conversation and behavior had convinced me before this occurrence that she had very little respect for truth and was highly romantic in all her notions. She frequently raised my ire by her behaviour to Sophia; professing to pity her because she was so uncultivated in her manners, when in fact, notwithstanding all the disadvantages of her rural training, her natural abilities and personal attractions were in my view far superior, and her moral qualities left the city lady far in the shade. In less than a week, before we heard from my husband, she received letters from Boston which threw her into ecstasies. Mrs. Waters had decided to send for her immediately. ‘And, dear Aunt, only think, there is an English officer to whom I was introduced before I left town, who wants to see the country and

has offered to come for me.' 'Why, Mary, how will he come and where will he stay?' 'Oh, he will come directly here in a chaise; he will not stay long, of course. He is a very fine man; you will like him I know. He is a perfect gentleman; is an officer in the East India service, and is come to see the country, before he returns to India. You will invite him here, dear Aunt, I shall be mortified if you do not; he is a particular friend of my dearest friends.'

"Seeing that I hesitated and began to hint at my surprise that her Uncle John had not written me on the subject, she began to be highly excited, said she could not tell why; supposed he was so busy; and did not think there was any occasion for it; and much more which I have forgotten. Indeed, I was so surprised at the whole movement but at the same time so unsuspecting of any deceit on her part, that I knew not what to say or do to this new surprise; and, when, upon enquiry, I learned that the gentleman might arrive even that very evening, as he was riding about the country, I was perfectly astounded. To have a total stranger, a British officer, brought in upon our country domicile in this uncereemonious and sudden manner! There was no help for it; communication at that day was so difficult, indeed impossible, between distant friends. There were no railroads, no telegraph, nothing but the tardy stages twice a week, so that this energetic young lady had every advantage of me; and now all I could

do was to muster Sophia, and all my spinning girls, and Molly, the cook, and make the best preparations in my power. My own room was to be arranged as well as possible for his accommodation. There was no carpet on any room but the parlor; carpets were rarities in Vermont at that time; but we had curtains to the bed and windows, two white dressed toilet tables, and a few very common chairs. All hands were alive and interested in the great event; and we got in as good order as possible by night. Well we did, for, sure enough, before dark 'Capt. Ogilby' drove up to the door, and springing from the chaise rushed in, being met at once by the joyous delighted face of 'Miss Cook,' who introduced us with all imaginable grace and suavity. He was indeed a perfect gentleman in his manners, and very soon asked 'Miss Cook' when she would be ready to start for Boston.

"She appealed to me, of course; but I frankly expressed myself as having nothing to say, as I had been taken by surprise at her wishing to go so soon, without seeing her uncle or hearing from him; that it was my wish to receive her uncle's decision before she went, as she knew. It could not be long till we did so; and I hoped Capt. Ogilby would find a few days residence among the Vermont hills not irksome. My boys would be delighted to escort him over them if he was a pedestrian. He professed himself entirely devoted to Miss Cook's service, and gratefully and gracefully

accepted my invitations. Most ardently I hoped we should soon hear from your father. He had not heard about the Captain, as that day was the first I had heard of him; although I have every reason to think he was the only correspondent Miss Cook had at Boston. Why else should she keep all her letters secreted? She might have read any passages she pleased, but I was little used to the world and so entirely unsuspecting of her playing any tricks upon me, that I now look back upon my own stupidity with astonishment. It was very inconvenient on every account to have him stay long. And although he was very agreeable in his manners and intelligent, relating many amusing anecdotes about India such as convinced me he was really what he professed to be, an officer in command there, I was truly rejoiced to receive the expected letter from your father giving his 'reluctant consent to the young lady's preposterous wish to go to Boston but having no right to control her movements, and, as her friends there offered to bear the expenses there, and to see her safely back again in the spring, she must do as she pleased.' Thus she had his leave; when I read the passage to her, she colored and appeared agitated, but expressed great joy, and, as I read on, I found a passage in the letter which was so amusing I read it aloud to them. It was the famous anecdote you have all heard, but I will relate it for the benefit of the rising generation.

“Your father was obliged to attend a meeting of the faculty at Burlington College [University of Vermont] and, while there one day, ‘there was a great cry on the lake shore about a huge bear that had been doing mischief to the farmers in the vicinity, who had turned out en masse to capture him if possible; but Bruin, finding himself so hotly pursued, took to the lake and swam for his life. A youth on the shore jumped into a boat and pursued; the bear, either finding himself fatigued, or from an instinctive knowledge of his own power, as soon as the boat came near him, jumped in, and seated himself in the head of the vessel, growling and showing his teeth to his fellow passenger in a manner that effectually induced him to steer for the nearest land; which the bear perceiving sat still, till the boat touched the shore when he leaped out, and took to the woods amidst the shouts of the multitude who were the delighted spectators of his cunning and agility.’ This I read to my guests, to the great delight of the captain, and, several years after, we received from Colonel Tyler a London magazine containing the ‘Life of the Beautiful and Accomplished Lady Ogilby,’ in which it was asserted that, while Sir David Ogilby and his lady were in America, they traveled through Vermont, and on the romantic shore of Lake Champlain *witnessed* this very incident. So much for their veracity!

“But this is before my story. The next morning after the letter from your father was received, Captain

Ogilby made a formal proposal to me for the hand of my beautiful niece, expressing great sorrow that they could not see Judge Tyler, but presuming her uncle in Boston would not object to their union; said it was necessary for him to return to Europe immediately, and he could not think of leaving the country without her and so forth. I was somewhat surprised, but, having had strong suspicions that there was an attachment growing up between them, it was not altogether astounding. I do not remember my reply; but it signified that Col. Tyler was the one who had the care of Mary, and I presumed he would do what was for her happiness; expressing my trust in his honor and good principles, trusting that he would, if he took her from all her friends, be a friend indeed to the orphan who trusted him. He made many professions, and I have no reason to think that he ever failed. As we supposed, they went immediately to Boston and soon sailed for Europe.

“We heard afterwards through the public papers that he was knighted by King George for services performed in England before he came to America, that he introduced his wife to the queen, that she was the admired of all beholders for the time they tarried in London. When he returned to India, he took her with him. She lived to have three children, but never visited Europe or America again. We presume she wrote her memoir herself, but do not know. It abounded with details of her early days, and eulogisms upon her family connec-

tions, especially her uncle the *Chief Justice of Vermont*, with whom they traveled through that *American Switzerland*, and witnessed the exciting bear-hunt! All this sounded grand in European ears. We did not hear any more about them till after her death when Sir David, probably by her request, sent her brother Horatio a variety of beautiful things that belonged to her, none of which I ever saw, as Horatio lived in Maine and we never saw him in Vermont. There are several painful anecdotes connected with the conduct of this romantic affair, which I have designedly omitted. She is gone and I have no desire to record unpleasant circumstances, which you, my children, already know, and had better be forgotten.

“Your father came home soon after they left us, and was much amused, as well as somewhat annoyed, by Mary’s proceedings. He agreed with me in the opinion that the plan was laid before she left Boston; which opinion was confirmed by a letter from Col. Tyler telling us of their behaviour there. They did not call upon him or any friends in town, and he knew nothing of their being there until he received a letter from me, informing him of her having left in company of Capt. Ogilby and their engagement. He then visited every hotel and genteel boarding place enquiring for the Captain. At last he encountered a captain of a Liverpool ship, who informed him that a gentleman calling himself ‘Capt. Ogilby’ had that day taken passage for himself and

lady on board his ship where he presumed they then were. They proceeded thither, and found the lady, who insisted in answer to his questions, they were married *at our house*. He in vain appealed to my letter. She persisted and said many hard and abusive things of me. Soon the Captain came in and confirmed her story. Her uncle in vain begged them to have the ceremony performed there for his satisfaction; but no, they were indignant at his desiring it; and finally they sailed that night, I believe. It was a singular affair. If they were married in Vermont, it certainly was not at my house; nor did either of them hint a wish of that kind. His honorable conduct towards her after their arrival in London (according to the papers, etc.,) gave us reason to hope that all was right; but her treatment of me was infamous and cruel.”¹

¹ The “London Magazine,” containing the account of Lady Ogilby, quoted by Madam Tyler, *The Lady's Monthly Museum* for April, 1806, is still in the possession of the Tyler family. In this romantic biography, the subject is so “dieted with praise like a pet lamb in a sentimental farce” that the realist welcomes Madam Tyler's pointed suggestion that “she wrote it herself.” As a counterpiece to her aunt's unflattering picture of Miss Cook, a paraphrase of this fervent composition may prove entertaining. Accompanying “an elegant portrait” is a biographical sketch of “a female universally beloved and deservedly admired—one of the loveliest trans-Atlantic productions that has ever been wafted to the British shores.

‘For she is all that painting can express
Or youthful poets fancy when they love.’

Miss Cook was in childhood not only remarkable for a peculiar sweetness of disposition, but for a perfect symmetry of form and a striking intelligence of face, a face which acted as an index to an amiable and

exalted mind. She became the uncontrolled mistress of her actions at the age of fifteen. With a heart tremblingly alive to all the softer feelings, yet influenced by a strict sense of that propriety of conduct which every female ought to pursue, Miss Cook never in the slightest instance deviated from a line of rectitude, though she frequently became the dupe of artifice and deceit."

In the "veracious" *first hand* sketch of the bear-hunt, Bruin hugs to his bosom the *Indian* occupant of the canoe, seemingly with lavish affection, and then by guiding glances of the eye urges him to the haven where he would be. "During Lady Ogilby's residence in her uncle's family at Vermont, which, in picturesque beauty of scenery, may be called the Switzerland of the New World, she appears to have cultivated a natural taste for poetry and the fine arts." Can such things be?

CHAPTER X

DARKNESS AND LIGHT (1810-1815)

John in Uncle Palmer's store in Boston—his comfort to his parents. Young Royall Tyler at the University of Vermont—his injured foot at Brattleboro—his illness and death at Burlington. Financial troubles and depression of the father. Removal to Brattleboro village and many homes there. Conclusion of Memoir fifty years later in midst of the Civil War.

“FOR several years Royall had been preparing for college, and our dear John, as your father could not afford to send both to college, decided to go into his Uncle Palmer's¹ store in Boston, the firm of King and Palmer, in 1810. He was very small of his age, being between thirteen and fourteen, when he went there, and my brother, when he acknowledged his safe arrival, said they were much afraid he would not answer their purpose; however, before his term of probation had expired, he acknowledged he was the best assistant they had; and John amused us by his exultant account of the errors he frequently detected in the bills drawn out by

¹ George Palmer, Mary's youngest brother, born in 1788. After him both George Palmer Tyler and George Palmer Putnam were named.

the clerk who was a grown man. It was even at that early day a fact that his genius for arithmetic was extraordinary. And then, what was even better than all else, was his perfect truthfulness and fidelity to his master's interest. And oh, what rapture he created among us all, especially the little ones, when he would come home for a visit and bring a trunk packed full of presents for everyone,—Aunt Sophy, the swarm of children, not forgetting father and mother. Of course for the first few years these presents were not costly, but from that time to this, I need not say to you, what a constant friend and benefactor, as well as most affectionate son and brother he has always been! More of this hereafter.

“Royall went to college the [University of Vermont] about the time John went to Boston; dates I forget.¹ About this time came on the political troubles between England and America, which finally culminated in the War of 1812, which now forms so marked an era in American History. I only mention it as connected with our own history. Politics ran very high, then as now, and Madison's firmness was firmly supported by your father, but occasioned much dispute and fearful prognostications that we should all be crushed by the mighty power of England. The event proved how little was then known of the resources and energy of

¹ John went to Boston in the early summer of 1810; Royall entered college in the fall of 1811. T. P. T.

our country. France, under orders of Bonaparte, pillaged our vessels at sea, and many merchants were ruined in consequence. On the other hand England impressed and cruelly treated our sailors, who, they pretended, were Englishmen and belonged to them. Thus bitter complaints reached Congress from every side, and divisions arose which seemed indeed to threaten anarchy and civil war; but, after war was actually declared, patriotism triumphed and victory ensued. In 1812 our college at Burlington was taken possession of for a time and the students dispersed. Royall came home but returned after McDonald's [Macdonough's] victory on Lake Champlain. It was after his return to college and his sophomore year, that he wrote the poem entitled 'The Present Age.'¹ This was highly approved by the faculty, and *his mother* thought it very fine for a boy of eighteen. The next summer he came home again, the troubles still continuing, so as to make your father think it best for him not to return. He came home after Commencement in August, and tarried at home till the next spring. It was during that time that his Aunt Sophia took the miniature of him, which I value so much as the only likeness of his sweet countenance on earth, and, although not quite perfect, is precious to me, and wonderful, as the production of a

¹ These spirited stanzas, breathing a mettlesome boy's contempt for Napoleon and other royal tyrants, have been preserved by the Tyler family. Extant, also, is young Royall's clever play, *The Dumb Gent.* "performed at Burlington College, Vermont, in 1812." See Appendix B.

young girl who had never taken a lesson in drawing; for her sake as well as his I value it. That winter of 1813 he met with a sad accident, cutting his foot nearly off with an ax, which kept him home with me several months; and a pleasant time we had together, notwithstanding the pain and anxiety the wound occasioned. So dreadful an accident, and the scene of distress occasioned, deserve a more circumstantial detail; and, although my story will again go back several years, I will relate it now.

“The winter was very severe, snow very deep; and, the day and night before, we had a terrible snowstorm; the sun shone and the cold was intense. Your father, finding that farming matters verified an old adage, ‘He who by the plough would thrive, must either hold himself or drive,’ had let the farm to a Mr. Wood, who had lived with us one or two years previously as an overseer and chief labourer. He was a young married man, and we let him have two back rooms in the house, and he brought his wife there; but not as assistant; she had nothing to do with the house except her own rooms. He took the farm ‘to the halves,’ as our farmers say, and they boarded themselves. Therefore we had at this time no family but myself and children during your father’s winter circuit. One morning, the next after the great snowstorm, Mary, who was baking in our old fashioned brick oven, called upon Royall to go to the barn (farther than to Mr. Steen’s barn from here)

and split her some oven wood; the snow was two or three feet deep, and, after surveying the prospect rather woefully, he finally drew on a pair of his father's old boots, and plunged through the drifts; the wind, blowing a gale, filled up his tracks as he went with the new fallen snow. I was engaged with my baby Charles, just creeping about the carpet, and my needle, and for some time thought nothing about his absence, till Mary, grown impatient for her wood, came to the parlour wondering what detained Royall so long. I was in the north parlour (which I had made my bedroom for the winter), and just then heard a heavy step coming through the south room, and soon Royall opened the door, pale as death, but holding on by the door, pointed to his foot, smiling and saying, 'Mama, I have been doing a troublesome job, I fear,' and, following his motioning I quickly saw an awful gash in the boot, and running to assist him to a chair said, 'How did it happen, my dear child?' I called for help and Mrs. Wood, who occupied what we called the middle room, ran in, alarmed at my distressed voice, and together we succeeded in getting off the boot.

"His foot fell, being cut from the great toe to the instep in a slanting direction, so as to have only the skin of his foot at the bottom. Involuntarily I endeavoured to replace it in a natural position, but in vain; so we bound it up as well as we could and placed him in the bed with his foot raised higher than his head, to prevent

as much as possible the flow of blood, fearing he would bleed to death before a doctor could be obtained. Mr. Wood was absent. Edward [aged 12] and Joseph [aged 8] were the only possible messengers we had that could get through drifts higher than their heads. Edward was dispatched to Mr. Parks, with the sad news, begging him, if possible, to go for Dr. Fitch. The child had to tumble over and over to break his own way. But Mr. Parks instantly turned out his team, and, with the help of the boys, broke through that long lonely road. Meanwhile Royall, the picture of patience, asked for a book, and, although occasionally groaning with pain, and afraid to move lest he should increase the flow of blood, lay and read for nearly two hours before the doctor could get along. Just before he came, Mr. Wood came home and volunteered to assist in dressing the wound; the doctor saying it must be sewed on, and then he must keep perfectly still two or three days, when he would come again. The doctor comforted me by saying we had done the best we could possibly have done, and that the loss of blood would be advantageous as it would probably prevent fever. Accordingly, as fast as we could prepare lint, and all the things necessary, Mr. Wood and the doctor were left to their awful job.

“I took my Charles and, with all the others gathered round me, sat by Mrs. Wood’s fire, tremblingly expecting to hear Royall scream, or that he had fainted, for he

looked as though he had no more blood left in him. When suddenly we heard a heavy fall in the room, we rushed in, just as the doctor had flung a pitcher of water in Mr. Wood's face, who had fainted and fallen his whole length on the carpet. Joseph instantly took his place and proved a more efficient assistant. Mr. Wood afterwards said he was almost afraid to offer his services, as he never could bear the sight of blood without being faint, but he was the only man present so he resolved to try. Poor man, we felt grieved for him and very grateful for his endeavours; he felt mortified, but was not to blame in the least. Royall bore the operation like a hero, and we drew out the trundle bed from under my bed, which I had put there, for Joseph and George to sleep in through the winter, Amelia and Charles sleeping with me; but now the doctor, assisted by Mr. Wood, placed Royall on it, with directions not to move him more than was absolutely necessary till he called again. Mr. and Mrs. Wood were very kind in assisting me all the time he was confined there. We had a large fireplace in the room and were obliged to keep large fires to prevent his suffering so far from it, and late at night; for some time indeed all night, as I had to assist him to move occasionally he was in so much pain.

“This always brings to my recollection a little circumstance, which I have always felt to be a most *providential* thing. This was a remarkably tempestuous season, and the winds had full power at that corner of the

house, being the northwest. One night while I was watching Royall, it blew a hurricane almost; being wearied out for want of rest, I threw myself down on the outside of the bed to nurse Charles, lest he should disturb Royall who had fallen asleep; not intending to fall asleep, as I left a fire burning on the andirons; but I did, nor awoke till Royall called me for some drink. I quickly arose, and found my fire all burnt out, and brands fallen in every direction. After attending to Royall, who complained of the cold, I went to the fireplace, gathering together the scattered fragments, when, with a sensation of horror mixed with adoring gratitude to 'Him who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth,' I discovered that a coal had fallen during my sleep and burnt itself a lodgement in the woodwork on one side of the fireplace large enough to put my hand in, and then all gone out! What but an ever watchful and omnipotent Power, could so have overruled two such powerful elements as wind and fire? If they had had their natural and uncontrolled sway, we must all have been destroyed in all human probability. So I have ever felt, when this scene has occurred to my mind. The wind continued to blow furiously, and my poor boy or his mother had no more rest that night; it was nearly morning, and the wind abated to our great joy and comfort. When I think of our sufferings from cold on this, and many other times of sickness, during my early married life, I feel disposed to vote for a monument to the memory of

the first inventor of family stoves; truly the people of this age know little of the horrors of winter.

"It was not till the next September that my precious Royall was able to return to college. In the meantime the troops had left; peace was contemplated, and the college buildings, which had been converted into barracks, were again occupied peacefully. I could enlarge, with all a mother's memories, upon the sad parting with my darling son, never to meet again in this world, but I forbear. He died of typhus fever the next November. That sad November! You all remember it as the era of your dear father's bitter distresses. In addition to the loss of his office as judge, he was called from the hot bed of party, the legislature, then sitting at Montpelier, to attend the death bed of a darling son, just about to achieve the highest honors of his college, arrived at the age when he began to be the friend and companion, as well as the beloved son, of his father, to come home and find his property all under attachment for debt! Such an accumulation of sorrows overwhelmed him, and for three years he steadily refused to be comforted, or attend to any business.¹

¹ Mother's recollections of this sad time somewhat exaggerate the effect upon Father's mind, at least as to the duration of his inaction. Royall died Nov. 1813. For some months my father did nothing but to attend to the disordered state of his affairs; but the next year he resumed practice. His dockets, from 1815 to 1822 inclusive, show a large number of cases. He accepted the Registership of Probate, when his friend Denison became judge, Dec. 29, 1815, after having attended the spring and fall courts of 1815. T. P. T.

“Then it was that we all tasted the bitter cup of adversity; to see my husband so stricken down, so suddenly giving up all hope, all desire, as it seemed, to exert his fine abilities for the support of his remaining children, was the climax of sorrow to me. My heart was almost broken by the loss of my first-born, my darling; too much, I fear, of an idol! but God had taken him, and I could say truly, ‘Thy will be done.’ But the living sorrow of witnessing your father’s deep depression was indeed a severe trial! Of all else I thought little in comparison. You and every one must be surprised that anything earthly could overpower such a mind, but, when we reflect that he had been for weeks harassed over political affairs, and recollect that he had suffered loss of position and consequently of all means of living, and that all those who had been particularly friendly to him in prosperity now turned about and seized upon what little we possessed before he returned home from his sad duties at Burlington; so that he found all the cattle, sheep, carriages, library, in short, everything that the law allowed them to attach, taken by those who for years had been in the habit of receiving at this season all demands on his return from his circuit (evidently done, under a strong party feeling, in order to break down his influence), there can be no wonder, all this coming simultaneously with his other deep affliction, that for awhile he felt deserted and alone in the world. At sight of his living boys entering the

room, and often after sitting long in deep meditation, he would spring from his chair, walk the room in agony, exclaiming, 'O how lovely! how lovely!' But not a word could he say to me respecting that last scene, which he evidently dwelt upon and which I yearned to hear about but, on account of his deep sorrow and peculiar feelings, I never could obtain—except what he wrote journal-wise during the week he was in attendance upon his sick bed. It is needless, except for future generations, to record what a comfort amidst all this affliction our dear John was to us. Although now only seventeen, a clerk in a store, he was our main support during his father's confinement. From his perquisites and slender income he frequently sent a trunk packed with necessaries and comforts for him and all of us; and as often as his business would permit came to cheer us by his cheerful conversation and sweet exhilarating smiles. *I write this as an example for all sons similarly situated!* Judge Denison¹ was also a true friend to us at this time. The only visits we made from home for a year or two were to his house; he would come and take no denial from your father till he persuaded him to go, and finally was the means of awakening some resolution. The judge was, at the time, Judge of Probate, and persuaded your father to be his Register under the idea of his own inability as a ready

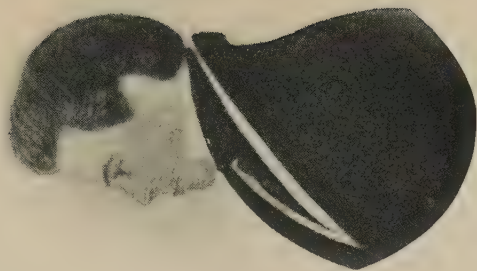
¹ Hon. Gilbert Denison, son of Capt. David D. of Leyden, Mass., and probate judge for the district of Marlboro in 1809.

writer, and it would be a great favor if he would consent. And thus my husband first commenced business, and the cloud began to lift from our horizon.

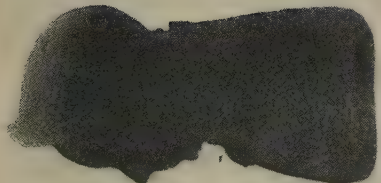
“I have already recorded how your father’s spirits did finally sink under the distressing events of those days, notwithstanding his benevolent attempts to keep up mine. In fact, the world is full of evidence that our sex (proverbially the weaker) is found strongest in the day of trial. Perhaps we may without vanity say, our faith in God is more firm and reliable; we feel that here is our only sure trust, and His will the best, although we cannot see why; we feel our own weakness and cling to the Truth as revealed with true hope, the only anchor of the soul in adversity. It would be ingratitude in me not to record that his faith supported me in all the changing scenes of my eventful life; thanks be to a merciful God. Within a week after his last letter from Burlington was written,¹ your dear father came home. He found the situation of his affairs so much worse than he expected, that his heart was almost broken. He found that every possible advantage had been taken of his absence (even by those he thought friendly) to secure a lien upon all his property; that it was impossible to redeem our homestead, and his spirits sank under the pressure. He had left a man by the name of Nathan Wood, to superintend the farm, for which he was to

¹ Several letters from Royall Tyler at his dying son’s bedside have been omitted.

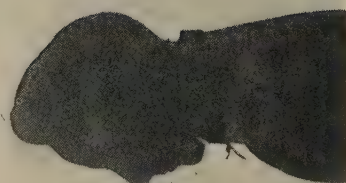
have a certain share of the profits. This man had previously lived with us a year or two, for wages, but this year he had married and prevailed upon us to let him bring his young wife into the back rooms of our house. She had been there several months; was an intelligent pleasant woman, and we thought ourselves fortunate in the arrangement; especially as your father had perfect confidence in his, Wood's honesty. But adversity is the touchstone of friendship, as well as honesty, and, on examining his accounts and transactions, your father found them in such a state of confusion that he called in a neighbor in whom he had confidence to assist in adjusting them. Wood had in fact brought a large claim against him, which he had reason to think unjust, and for the security of which Wood had brought suit; attaching property, and pretending to me, in my husband's absence and my great distress, that this was done in friendship to prevent others from doing the same. However, it proved that all this was false, and that Wood was in fact indebted to us. When this perplexing business was settled, and our house cleared of that family, your father's spirits sank, as I have before said, to such a degree, that he would not see any of his old friends who called, or answer any of the numerous letters he received, urging him to return to the bar, assuring him of their friendship and great desire to see him among them and hear his voice again. All was in vain. He seemed to dread any allusion to his lost son; he would



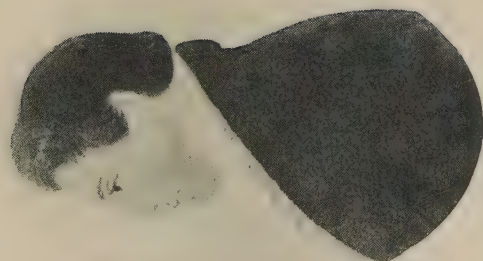
William Clark Tyler



Abiel Winship



Edward Royall Tyler



Royall Tyler, Jr.

not allow even me to speak about him. Judge Denison, our long tried friend, had buried a fine boy about Royall's age, who entered college with Royall¹, but, his health failing, he left, after the first term, and went South where he died; and perhaps a feeling of sympathy enabled the judge to know how to approach your father; at all events he was the only friend for many months that he would see.

"About this time it was that the judge had been appointed Judge of Probate, and he ceased not to urge your father to become Register, and finally succeeded, as I have said. Soon after he persuaded your father to sell our farm, pay off all the village demands yet unsettled, and finally we removed to this village, hiring the house then owned by Grindall Ellis, Esquire, near the Insane Asylum. This was, however, many years before that institution was thought of. We, afterwards, as you all know, lived in various houses in this place, during which time our dear boys in Boston and New York (where William and Edward were for some time in stores as apprentices with my brother) grew in age and strength, and were all our dependence. John, who in time became connected in business with Mr. [Abiel] Winship, was of special service. John became attached to Mr. Winship's daughter whom he later married; but, before that interesting event took place, he told his father he had resolved never to marry till he

¹ The Tyler family preserves an elegy by young Henry Denison, on his beloved friend, whom he was so soon to join.

had provided a *home for us*. This resolution he kept and finally (1820-1821) purchased this place where we now live.¹ At this time his father began to be seriously afflicted by the awful disease which finally occasioned his death²; he lived, however, several years, but lost all inclination to go from home and for that reason declined John's invitation to his wedding³ but insisted upon my going; which I did; and then I first saw Miss Winship, then a very lovely young lady, and still living, his faithful and affectionate wife.

"Now I think I have written enough. I began with an account of my birth, and the great Revolution, the birth of the American Nation. And now I have lived to see her struggling for life with her own rebellious children. What will be the final issue is known only to Him whose right to rule we joyfully acknowledge, and whose wisdom we implicitly trust. If I should attempt to record all the incidents and events of the last fifty years of my life, my strength and your patience would be exhausted; therefore I bid you adieu. I am now eighty-eight years and eight months old."⁴

¹ In 1815 the Tyler family moved to a frame house, then the most northerly in town on the site of the Marsh building and lived there a year. They then moved to the house on Main Street, north of the Centre Church, three years later to the Sikes house, and thence to a permanent home on Putney Street near the Common.

² Royall Tyler died of cancer, Aug. 16, 1826.

³ John married Mary Winship in 1820.

⁴ Madam Tyler thus closes in November, 1863, the Book begun by her five and one half years before in May, 1858. She lived until her ninety-second year, July 7, 1866.

APPENDIX A

**Family Trees of Hunts, Palmers, and
Tylers**

DRAFTED BY CHARLES E. MERRITT

APPENDIX B

Grandmother Tyler and Her Children

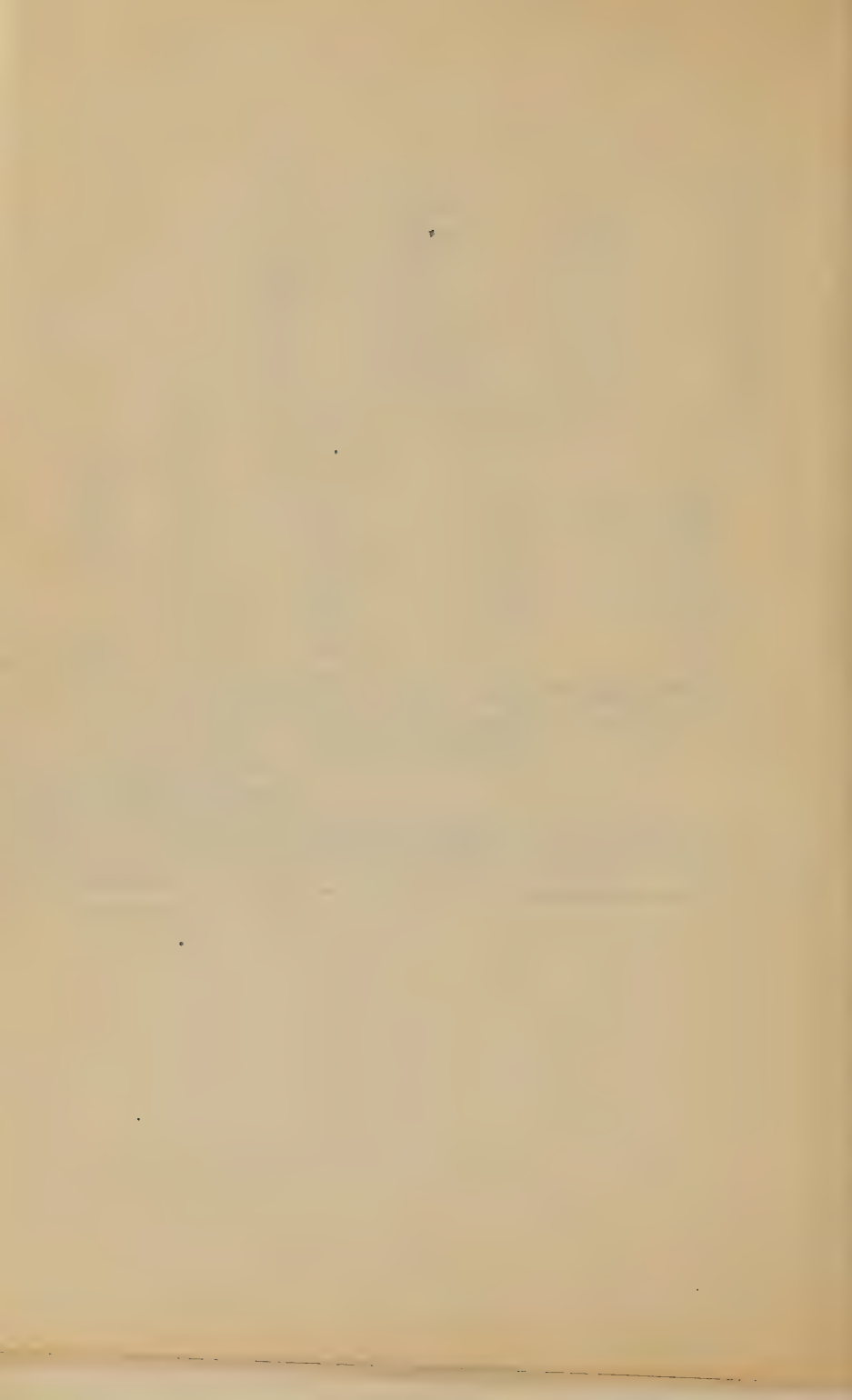
Prepared from Family Papers Given

to

Helen Tyler Brown

by

Rev. Thomas Pickman Tyler, D.D.



APPENDIX B

Grandmother Tyler and Her Children

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APPENDIX B

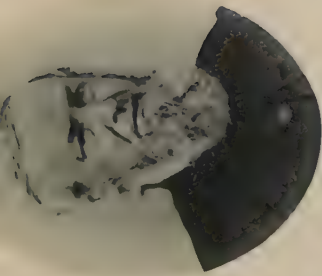
GRANDMOTHER TYLER AND HER CHILDREN

ON "Madam Tyler's" tombstone in the cemetery on Prospect Hill, Brattleboro, her sons and daughters inscribed the words: "And her children rise up and call her blessed." Of these dear ones she had written years before (1834) when the youngest had reached manhood:—"When I think of all my dear children and how good and obedient they have always been to my advice and wishes I cannot but feel confident that they will be blest of Him." How blessed she was in her children and how blessed they in her, the story of each and of that one's place in her heart gives proof both large and clear:—

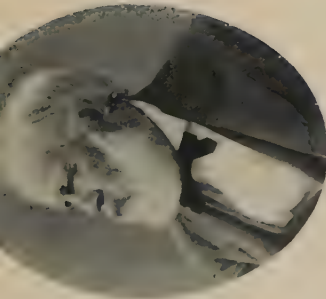
1. Royall Tyler (1794–1813). The second half of the Book is brightened by the growth of the first-born from infancy to brilliant lovable youth and its last chapter darkened by his death at the University of Vermont in his Junior year. An obituary notice by an unknown hand shows the admiration of his masters and fellows for this wonderful boy:—

"DIED, on the 7th of Nov. 1813, in the 19th year of

his age, ROYALL TYLER, JR., son of the HON. ROYALL TYLER, Esq., of Brattleborough, a Junior Sophister in the University of Vermont. It is rarely our melancholy duty to record the death of a young man, who possessed such an amiable temper, so fine a genius, or who had made such extensive acquirements in the several departments of learning. His taste was highly cultivated, his judgment discriminating, his memory retentive, and he had in store a rich and copious fund of general information. His composition was marked with an accuracy and elegance which is seldom found in the productions of riper years. For poetry and some of the fine arts, he had that enthusiasm which is always the companion of genius, and his youthful specimens possessed much real merit. In the public exhibitions of his class distinguished parts were assigned him, and he always acquitted himself with honor. In the exhibition, which was to have taken place about the time of his death, the Authority of the College had assigned him a poem on the American Navy, and his class had selected him to write their Dialogue. Each of these parts he had written in a superior style. But at a time, when he was to be crowned with collegiate honors, when his instructors had expressed their confidence and approbation, and his classmates had testified their affection and respect, and at a time when all pointed him out as a fair candidate for future eminence and usefulness, he was arrested by a fatal disease, which soon



Rev. Thos. Pickman Tyler, D.D.



Judge Royall Tyler
(Charles)



Rev. George Palmer Tyler, D.D.
and his Grandson



Rev. Joseph Dennie Tyler, D.D.



Mary Whitwell Tyler



Grandmother Tyler and her
daughter—Arrelia Sophia Tyler



Gen. John Steele Tyler

terminated all our hopes and expectations. His funeral rites were attended with every mark of respect. A sermon on the occasion was delivered in the College Chapel by the President; and his remains were followed to the grave by the Officers and Students of the University, the Phi Sigma Nu Society, of which he was a member, and a large number of respectable citizens. The deep sorrow, which appeared in the countenances of his companions, was the most expressive Eulogy which could be pronounced on the character of this amiable and accomplished youth."

Many are Mary Tyler's memorials of her oldest son—"reflections on his tomb" in pathetic verse, loving mention of Royall in her journals and note books on repeated anniversaries of his birth and death: "My beloved Royall's birthday—he would have been twenty-seven had he lived—but I humbly know he has long been happy among the just made perfect, through the merits of their blessed Lord."

2. John Steele Tyler (1796–1876). The eldest son of the Tylers was "too early lost for public fame." The second—"Jack" in his youth, "the General" in his age—who relinquished his own desire for college and a professional career that his dear Royall, whom he called "Rial," might have the education worthy of his budding genius, lived to become a "first citizen" of no mean city. John is "the industrious apprentice" who serves faithfully in his boyhood, marries his master's

daughter, sits at the head of the table and rides in a golden coach—all this by dint of tremendous energy, clear judgment and absolute fairness. For sixty-five years and more he was closely identified with the mercantile and military life at Boston. At the age of fourteen working in his uncle George Palmer's store, later the employee and son-in-law of Abiel Winship, in middle and later life an adjustor of averages, he becomes an alderman of his city, member of many boards, trustee of many foundations, president of many societies, recipient of many degrees from colleges and lodges. He rides too at the head of many processions as "trainband captain"—commander of the Ancient and Honorables, marshal of all municipal parades. "The finest-mannered officer of his day," declared one admirer; "We thought him the greatest man the city contained," asserted another. His heart and purse are always open. "A constant friend and benefactor as well as a most affectionate son and brother he has always been," said his mother. The struggling shop-boy sends and brings little presents to his family. The prospering youth will not marry until he has provided a home for his parents—the house on Putney Road near the Common, where they died. The mature merchant writes thus to a student brother: "As to my being inconvenienced, give it not a thought. I am used to it, as the reds were to being skinned, and your balance is but a drop in the bucket. While I am in health, I can

take good care of my own and help all my relatives." Throughout long years, he is dispenser of bounty, guide, counselor and banker—John, the Beloved.

3. Mary Whitwell Tyler (1798–1874). "Aunt Mary" was in her early years a natural kindergartner. Burnham, the Brattleboro chronicler, recalls that "her influence over a large portion of the children in this village was greater than that of their own parents." She was a member of the Episcopal Church, but at the time when there was no organization in Brattleboro she gathered the children for the Sunday School and meeting in the old church on the Common. If clothing for destitute children was wanting, she contrived some way to get it for them. Her affection for the little ones, rich or poor, was unbounded. From her girlhood she is the housekeeper of the family. Her mother writes of her in 1821: "Mary does all the work, exerts herself extremely to save me all exertions. May she be rewarded as she deserves!"

Aunt Mary was the fairy godmother of my childhood. I used to marvel how she knew just the very book or toy or ribbon that I most wished for, at Christmas time and on my birthday. I loved her next best to Mamma.

Remembrance bridges the years and I am a very little girl, toiling up a mountainous hill, dragging my sled behind me. The snow each side of the path is higher than my head. I tug and pull and my snow

arctics stub into the slippery pathway. All the big boys and girls are at the top and shout to me to get out of the way, they want to slide, and I am quite despairing when a soft voice calls my name and Aunt Mary takes my mittened hand and in a trice sled and I are beside her and a flock of sleds fly swiftly past us down the hill. How plainly I see her small wrapped-up person garbed in a great loose coat, a quilted dark silk hood tied with ribbons under her chin, her head nodding—a tremulous movement all over her body (palsy, poor lady!) How beaming with kindness her countenance was; how tender her tones when she spoke to me! I can see her, too, in summer time, descending the same hill, wearing a quaintly fashioned gown and a deeply frilled cap, a cane tap-, tapping to support her. She flits, in the visions of the past, around the old Tyler homestead in and out of the kitchen and the buttery, bringing delicious cookies for me to eat. Once again my small feet carry me up, up, to her third story room—the very nicest place in the world, I thought, except wherever Mamma was and I beside her. Flowers always bloomed in the wide window seats; cats and kittens always emerged from a box in a corner; all the chairs had big soft cushions and were covered with bright chintz, flounced to the floor. Peppermint candysticks were always produced from a certain table drawer; the room was always sunshiny—and, object of my admiration, it held a four poster bedstead, high

with feather mattresses, spread with a white coverlet having deep knotted fringes. Once when unheard I had mounted the steep winding stairs, I saw her kneeling by the bedside praying. I felt that she was akin to the angels. When, on my eleventh birthday, I heard that she was dead, I was heartbroken; even Mamma could not stay my tears nor assuage my grief.

4. Edward Royall Tyler (1800–1848). Edward, who spoiled by his baby-wailing the Brattleboro dinner-party of the Book, grew into splendid manhood. “He is in truth,” says his mother during one of his vacations, “a fine youth—all life and energy—and his piety, which I esteem the loveliest trait in his character, is as ardent as ever, although evidently softened and chastened by the genuine spirit of charity, to my infinite delight—although I never for a moment doubted it would be the case, as he grew in knowledge of men and things, and of his own heart.” While he was a clerk in the counting house of his uncle, George Palmer, in New York, his religious character was moulded by the preaching of Dr. Spring. As a member of the class of 1825 at Yale, he won distinction as a scholar. Having completed his theological studies at Andover, he held Connecticut pastorates at Middletown and Colebrook. As an ardent abolitionist, agent for the American Anti-Slavery Society, he pleaded the cause of the slave in his native Brattleboro, July 4, 1837—amid the protests of mob voices and cannon reports. He was successively

editor of *The Congregational Observer* (1838) and of *The New Englander* (1843), for which he wrote many noteworthy religious articles. With uncomplaining patience he fought against the disease which destroyed him in his forty-eighth year. The writer of his obituary in *The New Englander* saw in him "one of the best sort of men, one of those in whom the elements of character, well attempered by nature and refined by culture, are ennobled by faith and sanctified by devotion." Some achievement of this son's early career calls from his mother the comment: "O what a comfort is this to a parent's heart! What joy can equal that of thus hearing from all sides that my dear children are good and respectable!"

5. William Clark Tyler (1802-1882). Generous, affectionate, chivalrous, witty, with the vein of humor he inherited from his father, William Clark lived a youth full of gaiety and fine sentiment. Very delightful is his Hudibrastic account of a stage-journey to Boston, in a letter of 1820 to his little brother, Pickman. Of his generous gallantry this story is told. At the solicitation of the father of a lovely girl friend fatally ill with a wasting disease—discovered to be secretly in love with William—he declared himself her lover that her slow passage to the grave might be enriched with human joy. Dying she was happy in the love that his *friendship* gave. One of the presents returned by the father, a lacquered work-box, lined with

red satin and fitted with silver sewing implements, is to be seen today in the Tyler house on Tyler Street, mute evidence of William's chivalry. His mother notes of his nineteenth year that "he has grown up lovely and estimable." His career was that of a Boston merchant, a model citizen, active in civic and military organizations, honorable, broadminded. Never very wealthy, he was ever ready and able to assist generously all his relations. His mother writes in her day-book, under July 23, 1838: "Received this day from William a box containing clothes for Royall and Pickman and dresses for me, Mary and Amelia." Many such boxes did she record as coming from him. It was he whom we must thank for Grandmother Tyler's Memoir, for he sent her from Longwood, in 1858, a "beautiful book" bidding her muster up old remembrances; and it is his descendants who preserve the manuscript today. He lived a good man's life—the life of a Christian in all the ordinary activities of family and civic duties, a quiet existence, founded in integrity and a firm faith in God. It warms both mind and heart to have known such a man.

6. Joseph Dennie Tyler (1804–1852). The sixth child and fifth son of Royall and Mary Tyler bore the name of his father's friend and literary partner in the columns of *The Farmer's Museum* and, like all his brothers, possessed not only poetical talent but reasoning powers of a high order. In his mother's diary of July

9, 1823, appears this note: "This day busy packing up Joseph's things. May God especially guide, guard and keep my young son, thus cast upon the world, his own keeper; and may he so conduct himself at the Academy [Exeter], where he is going, as to gain himself friends and honor by his virtuous behavior, industry and steadiness." A letter from Exeter to his elder brother, John, reveals a jovial spirit akin to his father's and his sponsor's; and a later poem, on the death of his eighteen-year-old cousin, Catharine Putnam, displays his power to open the fount of tears. Graduated from Yale College in 1829, he chose the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Enthusiastic contemporaries regarded his sermons as "master-pieces, models, unsurpassed in strength, purity of style and solid learning by anything out of the pages of old English divines." But he preached little. According to the Brattleboro analyst, he early became interested in the instruction of the deaf and dumb and was a teacher in the first institute for that purpose in this country. In 1840 he was chosen principal of the Virginia Deaf and Dumb Asylum in Staunton, Virginia, where he died at the age of forty-eight. A rare and ripe scholar, a polished essayist, a vigorous reviewer, a charming versifier, he is best remembered for his life of noble self-sacrifice in a comparatively obscure and humble position. A Southern newspaper correspondent "had never seen a face so strikingly stamped with the impress of benevolence."

In his relations with his family as with his students, this man, so free from both cant and austerity, is ever the benevolent.

7. Amelia Sophia Tyler (1807-1878). A chapter (xxxiv) in Mary R. Cabot's *Annals of Brattleboro* summarizes the life-work of this "teacher of three generations." Amelia had the advantages of education in the school of her Aunt Amelia Curtis at Salem where her cousins, the Peabodys (Elizabeth Palmer's family) and the Pickmans (the family of Sophia Palmer) made much of the charming girl. Mary Tyler congratulates her daughter on "the tiny honor you have obtained in your lilliputian school" and bids her "rejoice that you are admitted into your aunt's school. I have little doubt that you will render yourself of great service to your aunt from my knowledge of your kind attentive disposition and habits. . . . You always were our darling child." The teacher was not made at the expense of the girl and woman. Full of exuberant vitality, she passed through dancing days that seemed to her mother to go beyond the bounds of "rational amusement" into the poise and power of a rich and balanced nature. Through the pages of old letters and diaries glimmer Amelia's romance and Amelia's renunciation, for her mother's sake, of her Bayard of a suitor, who, though refused, continued her faithful friend always. The school which Amelia started in her father's house, October 1, 1826, when she was nineteen, was continued

through various changes for over fifty years until her death in 1878—first a school for girls, then a “home school for boys under ten” and finally for boys and girls. The school for boys is advertised in *Putnam’s Magazine* for May, 1868; among Amelia’s references are her first cousins, George Palmer Putnam of New York City, Mrs. Horace Mann, Cambridge, Mass., and Mrs. Nathaniel Hawthorne, Concord, Mass. Kindergarten methods she learned directly from Elizabeth Peabody, adding her own adeptness in the teaching of languages and mathematics. One short year under Aunt Amelia’s tuition, not long before her death, opened the halls of learning to me, her grand-niece. Sloth and timidity fled, industry became natural and book and pen means of true enjoyment. Under her guidance study was an ever fresh delight. A sometime student of hers said to me: “Miss Amelia taught me more than any college professor—she was by far the best instructor I ever had.” Her mother’s last years were sunned by Amelia’s presence (she was the prompter of many of the Book’s best pages). She taught her brothers’ children. She was in demand in all the homes of her kindred; and, wherever she went, courage and joy attended, for to stricken hearts she brought balm of tender understanding and high consolation.

8. George Palmer Tyler (1809–1896). He was only a little lad of twelve or thirteen when he left home for a position in the Boston office of his elder brother, John;

and the boyish orthography of his early letters does not suggest the winner of several prizes for the best English composition in his class at Yale. After graduating with honors, he studied for the ministry at the Union Theological Seminary. Then there was long service at Lowville, New York (1840–1853). In his middle forties he returned to the home that he loved as pastor of the Centre Congregational Church at Brattleboro (1853–1869)—“the only minister reared in the church who has subsequently served it.” He was remembered in his native town as a “faithful efficient pastor and a fine preacher with an original mind” and “zealous in defense of the government during the Civil War.” Then there were later pulpits at Lansingburg and Troy, until his retirement from active service in 1891. Simplicity, sincerity and vividness were the qualities that men admired in him. In the letters of Mrs. Nathaniel Hawthorne (*The Century*, Nov., 1884) she alludes pleasantly to “George” as her favorite cousin. He it was who kept in touch with his lessening circle of near kindred, journeying to see them and writing often. I possess a gracious recollection of my great-uncle George and my Grandfather chatting and smoking beside Grandfather’s fireplace—the last two of the family. They died in the same year (1896). George Palmer Tyler was tender and loving; witty and genial, too, like his brothers, and like them a poet. Very clever and joyous are the verses in which he bids his brothers to a

Thanksgiving family reunion at his Brattleboro parsonage, holding out as a lure, that "after dinner we'll go home with Mother, take a weed and read her *new book*, round the fire in the north parlor." And William Clark, scintillating always, assents in verses full of gusto, hoping to "hear Mother's new book which a young girl, noted for her taste and talents, says is equal to a novel."

9. (Charles) Royall Tyler (1812-1896). The ninth child of Royall and Mary Tyler was christened "Charles" and was always so known in the family, but his name was formally changed to "Royall" by an act of the Massachusetts legislature in 1825. At this time the thirteen-year-old was, like his brother George Palmer before him, a clerk of John Steele Tyler. Like Joseph Dennie he was a graduate of Exeter and of Harvard (1834). A law-student in the office of Charles G. Loring, he was admitted to the bar in Massachusetts and a year or two later in Vermont. In Brattleboro he became the law-partner of Asa Keyes, whose daughter Laura he married. Successively, state's attorney, register of probate and member of the legislature, he held for fifty years the office of judge of probate and for forty-five that of county clerk. He died, October 27, 1896, the last of the eleven sons and daughters. His eulogists picture him as precise and methodical, yet warm-hearted and sympathetic; a man of deep knowledge and incorruptible integrity; the personifica-

tion of unaffected dignity, genial, loving and lovable. Many years of my life were spent with this most dear Grandfather, and I never saw him angry but twice. When he read of Custer's murder by Indians, he rose from his chair, flung down the paper, exclaiming, "I've always heard that the only good Indian is a dead one, and now I know it," and strode through the house, slamming the doors. When he saw a teamster brutally beating a fine pair of horses which were doing their struggling best to haul a heavily laden wood-sledge out of a deep snowdrift, he flayed the man with words. Grandfather was a veritable encyclopedia. I never asked him for information on any subject, that he could not furnish it or instruct me where to find it. Humility and impartial justice, tenderness and rectitude and deep but reserved piety were distinguishing characteristics, allied to wide learning and a keen sense of humor.

10. Thomas Pickman Tyler (1815-1892). Pickman or "Pick," as he was called by his loved ones, is the historiographer, the annalist of the family. With prophetic soul he preserved even in early youth the letters of Mary Tyler and her children; he wrote out at his Grandmother Palmer's dictation the reminiscences of her younger time; he annotated his Mother's Book; he prepared with meticulous care a biography of his father, which clamors for publication. The present sketches are based upon sources of information that survive through his loving interest in the history of his

people. We have many glimpses of his early life: as an infant in his mother's diary, "best child I ever saw, almost"; as a lad of eight reciting the poetic valedictory (from his father's pen) at Miss Rebecca Peck's school in East Village; as an undergraduate at Washington (Trinity) College, Hartford, exchanging amusing letters with his little brother Winship; as a youth in his early twenties, studying theology under Joseph or visiting Edward at Colebrook; as tutor at "Belle Farm," Virginia, whence he sent to his mother (1839) amusing pictures of "a Vermonter being the sole object of attention to three slaves." His mother writes on Nov. 22, 1837, "My dear Pickman's birthday—he is now twenty-two years old. May the future twenty-two years of his life, should he live so long, be filled with acts of piety and usefulness as the last has been by obedience and kindness to his parents and sisters and brothers." An inspired suggestion of his mother's, as she and her child walked home from church together, sank deep in his heart, and determined his future lot as a priest of God. So he tells us in exquisite lines, on which Mary Tyler makes this comment: "I am now nearly eighty-three years old, but nothing in all that long life gives me half the joy and satisfaction as the assurance that such a blessing followed those few words on that blessed summer afternoon; forever blessed be His holy name who put them into my heart." A graduate of the General Episcopal Seminary, he served long and well as a

clergyman at Fredonia and Batavia, New York,—a true priest and pastor. His later years were spent at Brattleboro. One who was a maiden when he was a youth told me: “All the Tyler boys were handsome and charming, but Pickman was the most fascinating, and the handsomest—all the girls were in love with him.” This charm he never lost. I felt it, as I used to walk and talk with him in his last days. Twenty years of broken health this fine soul, minister of God, endured. He was very dear to me, and I saw much of him as he slowly faded from life.

11. Abiel Winship Tyler (1818–1832). The youngest, like the oldest of the family, died in his happy teens. Grandmother Tyler’s eleventh child came to her in the interim of hope and comfortable circumstances before the complete breakdown of her husband’s health, with attendant hardships which resulted in his death after four years of suffering. His birth is laconically recorded in his father’s diary: “Monday, Nov. 9, 1818. Baby (Abiel Winship) born about one o’clock in the morning.” Three years later his mother notes: “Mary went to meeting with little Winship the first time he ever went (two and a half years old)—behaved very well. . . . Pickman (five and a half years) began to go to Sunday School. . . . I went to meeting with *all* my boys in afternoon, *five of them*, . . . the *little one* was very good.” A wisp of white sewing silk, rolled in a scrap of yellowed paper, preserves her last

record of this sunny tempered son: "The first silk made by me. My beloved Winship helped me the year before he died—silk worms, eggs and cocoon given him by his cousin Amelia Curtis. Mary Tyler." Winship's gravely bantering letters to "Pick" (Thomas Pickman), three years his senior, show the logic and rhetoric of a mature mind, as he relentlessly punctures ostensible fallacies of his elder. Like all the Tylers he was even in childhood a rational and articulate being. Abiel Winship's comrade brother wrote of him thus in his journal: "Abiel Winship Tyler. A slender delicate boy with rather more feminine features than the rest of us—yet he was manly in his thoughts and feelings . . . He made good use of what he acquired (i.e. knowledge) and thought more, and more justly, than most of those of the same age. His natural disposition was benevolent and affectionate and accompanied by a remarkable nobleness of feeling. . . . 'Light-hearted, gay and happy one,' who wrote in a letter: 'My amusements are few this spring, if I had more, it would be merrier, but I take what I can get and get more if I can.'

"He was a gracious boy
Full of all gentleness, of calmest hope,
Of sweet and quiet joy—there was a look
Of heaven upon his face, which painters gave
To the beloved disciple. How I loved that boy!"

(THOMAS PICKMAN TYLER, 1833.)

Sweet as the fragrance of the pink "bouncing Bets" blooming beside the deserted stone doorstep of Grandmother Tyler's first Vermont home at Guilford is the spiritual fragrance emanating from her diaries and letters. Year after year Grandmother Tyler's "bouncing Bets," lilies and lilacs, bud and blossom as prodigally as when she tended them. The bones of that home lie bleaching in the cellar hole, but still beauty mantles that lonely, lovely spot. Year by year thickens the hedge of lilacs, deepens the bank of lilies and spreads the clump of "bouncing Bets." So may we hope that the seeds she sowed in the souls of her children have grown and flowered and fruited throughout succeeding generations even to this day.

Grandmother Tyler omits in her Book any mention of the birth of her two youngest sons; of her mother's spending the last ten years of her life with her or of the beautiful relations ever sustained between herself and her Palmer kindred. Long, long letters, often sent "by hand," were exchanged and annual visits eagerly looked forward to. "Grandmamma" Palmer apologized to her daughter Mary for her dissertation on war and Unitarianism, "I have written too much—I know not how I got upon this but 'tis ever thus, whatsoever filleth my heart floweth my pen." Grandmamma, as visioned in her latest years, was witty, cheerful and conversational to the end.

A volume could be filled with the tale of the inter-

twined lives whose loves, achievements, joys and sorrows so vividly appear in these yellowed sheets of the family papers found in ancient trunks, sea-chests, sandalwood writing desks, and in chimney-corner cupboards and cubbyholes under stairways. Sisters Peabody, Pickman and Curtis and their families from Salem, Tylers from Boston, Palmers and Putnams from New York were frequent visitors. Elizabeth Peabody, Sophia and Mary and the Tyler cousins were much attached to one another. Sophia's daughter, Rose, wrote letters to Edith, daughter of (Charles) Royall Tyler 2nd. After Royall Tyler's death much aid was given to Mary's growing family by devoted friends. Space forbids quotation from the letters showing the faithful strong bonds uniting the circle of those to whom Mary Tyler was a family lodestone. Characters stand clearly forth. In 1861 Gertrude, daughter of Royall 2nd (Charles), was commended by her Grandmother Tyler for calling on "my sister Putnam," and in 1886 Elizabeth Peabody writes affectionately to her cousin Royall (Charles).

Grandmother Tyler's life from the death of her husband was wholly that of a mother, a mother in the widest sense of the word, for she mothered not only her children but the neighbors and the community as well. Wherever any progressive movement arose, within church or town, there her interest and aid were given. No distress was ever brought to her door that she did

not succor. She became a source of power in the place, constantly called upon for service to mind, heart or body. Her grandchildren loved her as their own parents, and every one who ever came in contact with her was the better man or maid or child, because of her wide judgment, her clear conception of right and wrong, her great charitableness towards erring ones, her quick and tender response to every call upon her love. "Madam Tyler" her townsmen called her for many years.

Her activities were varied—spinning woollen sheets and cloth, making sewing-silk from silkworms bred by herself and sons and fed on mulberries she had raised from seed she had sowed, were two special accomplishments. Before her death she embroidered a bedquilt for each daughter-in-law; and a silk needlecase, exquisitely made, went, I think, to every granddaughter.

The fatherless sons of one son, the motherless sons of another were received into her home and her powerful mother love influenced them as it had their fathers before them. In the old age of the three sons who survived her longest, one brother wrote to another, begging him to write oftener, and said, "I thought I would make one more attempt to stir you up that, when I get on the other side of the River which Bunyan saw, I can tell them who have gone before that I tried to keep the family bond unbroken while living."

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